

3 1761 08154664 0

UNIV. OF  
TORONTO  
LIBRARY









THE BIBLICAL WORLD



THE III  
BIBLICAL WORLD

---

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
ERNEST DE WITT BURTON

EDITORS  
ROBERT FRANCIS HARPER, IRA MAURICE PRICE, SHAILER MATHEWS, JAMES HENRY BREASTED,  
CLYDE WEBER VOTAW, HERBERT LOCKWOOD WILLETT, SHIRLEY JACKSON CASE, ALONZO KETCHAM  
PARKER, CHARLES RICHMOND HENDERSON, GEORGE BURMAN FOSTER, AND THEODORE GERALD SOARES

SECRETARIES OF THE BOARD OF EDITORS  
JOHN M. P. SMITH                      EDGAR J. GOODSPEED

---

*NEW SERIES. VOL. XL*

---

JULY—DECEMBER, 1912



122 839  
— 3 15 113.

The University of Chicago Press  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

BS  
410  
B38  
n.s.  
V. 40

Published .  
July, August, September, October, November, December, 1912

Composed and Printed By  
The University of Chicago Press  
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.

V

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## JULY

I. FRONTISPIECE: The Late Professor Willis Judson Beecher, D.D.	
II. EDITORIAL: The Relation between Religion and Freedom - -	3
III. THE MORAL PARADOX OF JESUS. Professor George DeWitt Castor, Ph.D. - - - - -	9
IV. THEOLOGY AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM. Gerald Birney Smith -	17
V. RELIGIOUS LIFE AT AMHERST. Professor John Franklin Genung, Ph.D., D.D. - - - - -	31
VI. THE MESSAGE OF JESUS TO THE YOUNG MEN OF TODAY. Presi- dent Rush Rhees, LL.D. - - - - -	38
VII. THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE. I. Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, Ph.D. - - - - -	43
VIII. THE DEBT OF THE MODERN WORLD TO ISRAEL'S PRIESTS. Professor Edward Chauncey Baldwin - - - - -	54
IX. WORK AND WORKERS - - - - -	65
X. BOOK REVIEWS: Bliss, The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine (Lewis Bayles Paton); Harris, The Odes and Psalms of Solomon (Ernest W. Parsons); Labouet et Batiffol, Les Odes de Solomon (Ernest W. Parsons) - - - - -	68
XI. NEW LITERATURE - - - - -	72

## AUGUST

I. FRONTISPIECE: The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina	
II. EDITORIAL: Hereditary Religion - - - - -	75
III. THE WORSHIP OF THE ROMAN EMPERORS. Professor Henry Fairfield Burton, LL.D. - - - - -	80
IV. HARNACK, LOISY, AND THE GOSPEL. Professor George Holley Gilbert, D.D. - - - - -	92
V. THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE. Gerald Birney Smith	97
VI. THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE. II. Pro- fessor Herbert Alden Youtz, Ph.D. - - - - -	109

VII.	SOME PRINCIPLES FOR SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION. Professor Edward E. Braithwaite, Ph.D.	118
VIII.	THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE. Professor Burton Scott Easton, D.D.	130
IX.	BOOK REVIEWS: Workman, Christian Thought to the Reformation (George Cross); Eucken, The Truth of Religion (Gerald Birney Smith); Royce, The Sources of Religious Insight (Gerald Birney Smith)	139
X.	NEW LITERATURE	144

---

### SEPTEMBER

I.	FRONTISPIECE: Professor Benjamin Wisner Bacon, D.D.	
II.	EDITORIAL: The Social Gospel	147
III.	CHRISTIANITY AND THE HOPE OF SOCIAL REDEMPTION. Professor Samuel Dickey	152
IV.	SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF HINDUISM AS A RELIGION. Professor Hervey D. Griswold	163
V.	THEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF RELIGION. Gerald Birney Smith	173
VI.	THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF COLORADO COLLEGE. Professor Edward S. Parsons	184
VII.	THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE. III. Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, Ph.D.	191
VIII.	THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE	202
IX.	CURRENT OPINION	205
X.	WORK AND WORKERS	207
XI.	BOOK REVIEWS: Case, The Historicity of Jesus (James Moffatt); Gray and Peake, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah (Ira M. Price); Welch, The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom (H. P. Smith)	210
XII.	NEW LITERATURE	216

---

### OCTOBER

I.	FRONTISPIECE: Professor Charles Richmond Henderson, Ph.D., D.D.	
II.	EDITORIAL: The Church a Permanent Need of Human Society	219
III.	THE PROBLEM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. I. Professor Kemper Fullerton	224

# CONTENTS

vii

IV. THEOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHOD. Gerald Birney Smith	- 236
V. A BASIS FOR RECONSTRUCTION IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. Professor Henry W. Wright	- - - - - 248
VI. THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE. IV. Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, Ph.D.	- - - - - 254
VII. THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE: The Apostolic Age, Professor George Holley Gilbert, 265; Suggestions for Leaders of Bible Clubs, Georgia Louise Chamberlin	- - 275
VIII. CURRENT OPINION	- - - - - 281
IX. WORK AND WORKERS	- - - - - 283
X. BOOK REVIEW: Wallis, Sociological Study of the Bible (W. G. Jordan)	- - - - - 285

## NOVEMBER

I. FRONTISPIECE: Revision Committee of the Japanese Bible	
II. EDITORIAL: The Church in Religious Education	- - - - 291
III. THE JAPANESE BIBLE. Professor Ernest W. Clement	- - - 296
IV. THE FUNCTION OF A CRITICAL THEOLOGY. Gerald Birney Smith	307
V. THE HISTORICITY OF THE APOSTOLIC DECREE. Professor Conrad H. Moehlmann	- - - - - 318
VI. THE PROBLEM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. Professor Kemper Fullerton	- - - - - 330
VII. THE PROPHETS AS MODELS FOR THE PREACHER. Professor Alex. R. Gordon, D.D.	- - - - - 338
VIII. THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE: The Apostolic Age, Professor George Holley Gilbert, 345; Suggestions for Leaders of Bible Clubs, Georgia Louise Chamberlin	- - 352
IX. CURRENT OPINION	- - - - - 356
X. BOOK REVIEWS: Brown, The Christian Hope (Herbert A. Youtz); Handcock, Mesopotamian Archaeology (Ira M. Price)	357
XI. NEW LITERATURE	- - - - - 360

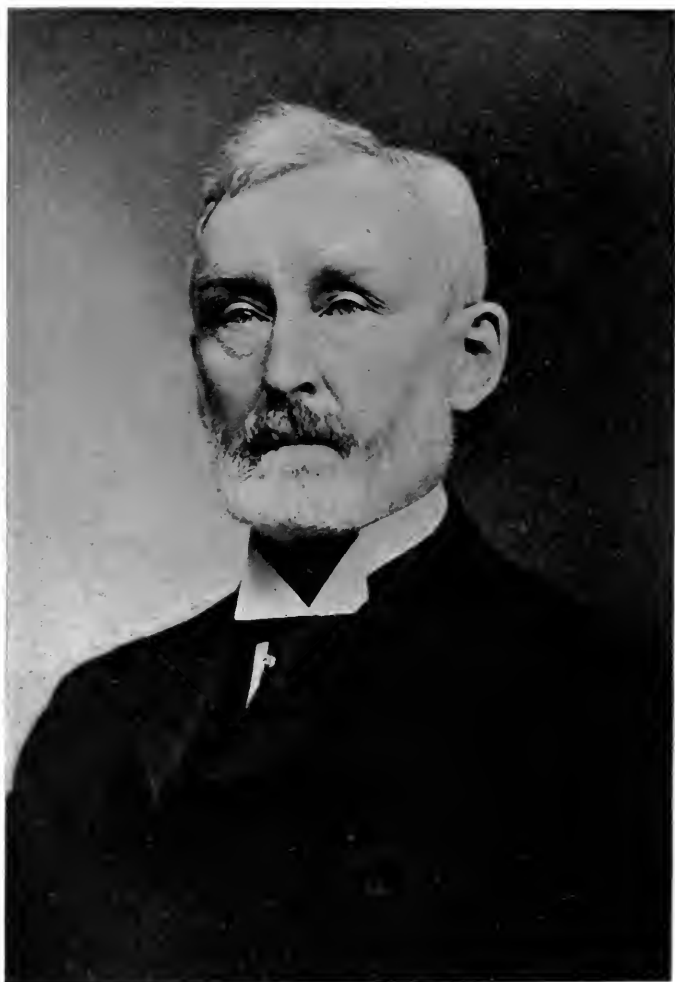
## DECEMBER

I. FRONTISPIECE: Professor Shailer Mathews, D.D.	
II. A CHANGE OF EDITORSHIP	- - - - - 363

III.	ADVANTAGES ACCRUING FROM THE FUNCTIONAL VIEW OF RELIGION AND THE BIBLE. Professor Frederick G. Henke	- - -	366
IV.	THE FALSE PERSPECTIVE OF RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM. Rev. Harold S. Brewster	- - - - -	374
V.	CHRISTIANITY AND CRITICAL THEOLOGY. Gerald Birney Smith		385
VI.	RELIGIOUS WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA. Thomas S. Evans	- - - - -	397
VII.	SOME IMPLICATIONS OF PAULINISM. Ernest D. Burton	- - -	403
VIII.	THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE: The Apostolic Age, Professor George Holley Gilbert, 413; Suggestions for Leaders of Bible Clubs, Georgia Louise Chamberlin	- -	420
IX.	BOOK REVIEWS: Slattery, The Authority of Religious Experience (Henry B. Robins); Hastings, Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics (Ira M. Price); Curtis, A History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith in Christendom and Beyond (J. W. Moncrief)		424
X.	NEW LITERATURE	- - - - -	431







THE LATE PROFESSOR WILLIS JUDSON BEECHER, D.D.

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XL

JULY, 1912

NUMBER I

## Editorial

### THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND FREEDOM

This theme recalls one of the old great questions and controversies whether we think of what has gone on in the world at large, or in the souls of silent strugglers and sufferers. Throughout the long human story religion has ever warred with freedom, freedom with religion. At times, indeed, it has seemed as if choice must be made between religion without freedom or freedom without religion. Ecclesiastical and clerical domination, trial and execution of heretics, opposition to all progress which the church did not authorize, and the resultant nameless ravages wrought upon consciences of whole peoples—our purpose now does not require us to dwell upon all this, done in the name of religion, or upon their analogues, done in the name of freedom. Other questions clamor for consideration. Are religion and church hereditarily burdened with the evils of unfreedom? Is religious earnestness quite necessarily allied with a certain narrowness, if not stupidity even? Shall irritating encroachments upon free personality drive many of the strongest and best of our fellow-men from religion, Christianity, and church? Is it possible to unify religion and freedom? If so, how?

In the "trial-and-error" plan of history, some methods of unification have proved false already. These may be mentioned and set aside.

One of these false ways is to superpose freedom upon religion from without. Here as everywhere, spiritual reality must be

appraised from the point of view of its own peculiarity, and not approached from an alien standpoint. In other days—sometimes in our own—one has come from modern culture to impose one's requirements upon religion; another has come from illumination, real or supposed, to pour a little water into the too thick wine of religion; still another has come with the purged concepts of natural and historical science to teach religion reason. Now, is this the way to reach the goal of religious freedom?

First to pursue this plan is the company of "free thinkers." Their idea is to have religious freedom in the world once and for all—by eradicating religion! A radical and startling measure, but simple. But are these free thinkers religiously free? They are poor slaves of their hatred of religion, from which, however, they cannot effect release, since the roots of religion in the human soul are ineradicable. Hence they only end in a sorry antitype or caricature of religion. Church, dogmas, parsons, inquisitors, they have all these. It is all transposed into a different key, but it is the same song. These people have not the slightest notion of the true nature of religion, of the secret of its power over the human heart, and therefore they can do religion no harm. Their assaults only evoke reactions. They are themselves product of the conditions which they oppose, response to unfreedom in religion. Instead of creating freedom, they need themselves to be made free.

But a quieter company has adopted this method—the born skeptics and scoffers. No emancipation awaits them, either. Doubt alone has no strength; does not really have faith in its own self. Like a cold wind, it may be healthy, but it melts no ice and loosens no fetters. No live religion, no live church, is assailable by ridicule. It is only of and through its own self that serious religion lives or dies. Skepticism easily passes over into superstition, as it arose out of blind faith. Such natures, compounded of skepticism and scorn, without earnest positive conviction, numerously circulate among us as politicians, artists, scholars; but nothing whatever is to be expected from them in the way of religious freedom, or of any other kind of freedom. They simply do not count, for freedom comes from affirmation, not negation.

But there are others who seek freedom in the same general way. They are the representatives of ecclesiastical "liberalism," religious free thought, "free" Christianity. They do not propose to have freedom without religion and church, but with them. Instead of attacking the truth of religion and church, they change its forms. They break oppressive confessional yokes. For an antiquated theology, they substitute a theology that is in better keeping with modern views. Under various names, they start parties to maintain the thought of freedom in the church. Do these people conclude that covenant between religion and freedom for which so many of us now yearn?

Without doubt this is a much more serious and hopeful undertaking. These men have some understanding of the nature, right, and truth of religion. Deep spirits as well as superficial, real greatness as well as imaginary, are to be found in this class—glorious men who are an honor to our race and who have a permanent place in the history of the human spirit, a Channing, a Parker, a Martineau. They have certainly accomplished very much. Fresh currents, free movements, they have started, which have been of great value. And yet, on the whole and in the main, their way has not led to the goal. There are two causes for this.

For one thing, it is quite out of the question to expect religious freedom from any party whatsoever. Parties can champion free *opinions* and *forms*, but these latter by no means guarantee the *spirit* of freedom. All opinions and forms are free as long as they are true and living, as long as they correspond to a definite stage of spiritual development. Thus, forms and opinions, which we call "orthodox," may be felt as thoroughly free by definite times and persons; and so-called "liberal" opinions and forms, as soon as they are outstripped by the development, are felt to be unfree. Everything that is petrified is felt to be yoke and compulsion, even if it be called "free thought." But all parties and tendencies tend to petrification—and naturally "liberal" parties most of all, since they must follow the development, and lose their right to be if they lag behind the development. Then, too, parties know little of self-criticism, much of self-praise, combined with disparagement and even calumny of other parties. Progress and

truth are held to be in their hands. But the great stream of life flows past them and turns into other channels. Dogmas, confessions; catechisms, inquisitions, popes and clerics reappear, together with all the personal lust for power, all the hatefulness and pettiness—in short, under a new name we have all the old misery, doubly hard to bear under the name of freedom.

But there is a second reason why freedom cannot be a party cause. There is a certain inner contradiction between freedom and party. Freedom must be a thing of the individual. Program and discipline belong to party. To these, every member of a party must submit. Large numbers must belong to a party, if it is to amount to much. Loneliness belongs to the essence of freedom. No one knows what freedom is who has never dared to hearken to his own soul when the world of convention and prepossession opposed and ignored him. The true heroes and harbingers of the world's freedom have been the men who, fighting against all the tendencies and parties of their day, have prepared the way for the new truth of God in the desert of semblance and of lies. Freedom dwells in the soul of the individual. It is a thing of disposition. It must be *earned* by him who would possess it. Therefore, in the most radical liberal parties there are men who are quite unfree and stupid, who have no understanding for modes of thought foreign to them, but also no regard for the freedom of others, and who do not shrink from brutal violence even while genuine lofty spiritual freedom may be found among those who are branded as obscurantists. Like truth, righteousness, love, piety, freedom is the prerogative of no party. It is simply vanity or ignorant audacity for one to say: "We are the party of the religiously free." To repeat, religious liberal parties can do much good; but freedom itself dwells in a higher and holier home.

In this connection there is another matter to which one hesitates to refer. But it seems to be a fact that all religious liberalism has a quite limited sphere of activity. It exercises some influence upon the culture class. But it cannot easily win the most serious-minded religious people. It finds its disciples for the most part with those who dispense with real religious power and passion. Why is this? Lack of knowledge, lack of courage, or, on the other

hand, the intractableness of fanaticism? That explanation is at once too easy and too unjust. The key to the riddle is that religious liberalism also works too much from without. It approaches religion with standards inwardly alien to religion. It comes with modern culture and world-view, with natural science, philosophy, and biblical criticism. But, *ultimately*, what does the religious soul care for all these things? We may perhaps logically discredit verbal inspiration, miracle, deity of Christ. The religious soul may not be able to resist our reasons, but it will not trust us *religiously*, and will close the gates of its sanctuary against us. It has the feeling that its is the better portion.

And so these manifold measures for obtaining religious freedom come to a point where they simply cannot get on any farther. Their advocates are puzzled today because, with reason and science and the whole intellectual development, and, as they think, religion itself, on their side, they cannot go forward. Dumbfounded, they see that in spite of scientific schooling and rational illumination, Roman Catholicism is achieving noteworthy victories, and apparently outworn Protestant beliefs, even mysticism and superstition, are enjoying a sort of reprimistation.

Then, can the human soul be both religious and free, critical and confident, hospitable and stable? Or, must we make a grievous choice, religion without freedom, freedom without religion, some miserable mixture of the two? And, look where we may in history, do we not see compulsion, confinement, oppression of free thought?

Except in one place. Religion and freedom were completely one in Jesus Christ. Jesus was redeemer—the deepest fact in any religion. Religion redeems from fear of fate, death, and sin—from fear of God, man, and ourselves. Even when it binds—binds to God and to conscience—it does so that it may free. This is dumbly and distantly true of all religions, it is clear as the sun in the case of Jesus. At times even Christianity has fettered; Jesus frees. His freedom is not from without inward, but from within outward. Freedom in religion can be created only through religion itself. Freedom must be demanded, not in the name of culture, of science, of criticism, but in God's name. To

Jesus, God was the reality of realities—not a word, not a theory, not a mystery of cult, not a distant dark cloud, but the sun giving life and light to all. And Jesus never asked men concerning their theories of God, forced no theories upon them. In his own person he brought God to them. And the God of Jesus is freedom's supreme and final word. Thus, Jesus became the world's freedom, the freedom of religion through God. Religion *is* freedom.



## THE MORAL PARADOX OF JESUS

---

PROFESSOR GEORGE DEWITT CASTOR, PH.D.  
Pacific Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Cal.

---

Mr. Chesterton is not a reliable theologian, but he does have a wonderful faculty of forcing his readers to look at things from a new point of view. In his exasperating but stimulating book *Orthodoxy* is a passage which shows real insight into Jesus' teaching and compels attention to a much-neglected aspect of it. Mr. Chesterton says:

Christ had a literary style of his own, not to be found, I think, elsewhere. It consists of an almost furious use of the *a fortiori*. His "how much more" is piled upon another like castle upon castle in the clouds. The diction used about Christ has been, and perhaps wisely, sweet and submissive; but the diction used by Christ is quite curiously gigantesque; it is full of camels leaping through needles, and mountains hurled into the sea. Morally it is equally terrific; he called himself a sword of slaughter, told men to buy swords if they sold their coats for them. That he used other even wilder words on the side of non-resistance greatly increases the mystery, but it also if anything rather increases the violence. Here we must remember the definition of Christianity already given. Christianity is a superhuman paradox whereby two opposite passions may blaze beside each other.

Mr. Chesterton's paradoxes are oftentimes only the idle fancies of a fertile brain, but this one can be dismissed in no such ready fashion; it strikes deep into the reality of things. Through the very texture of the teaching of Jesus runs this paradoxical element. The gospels bristle with contradictions. Any careful reader who looks there for moral guidance finds himself confronted with two radically different attitudes toward life. Side by side with a renunciation of the world as stern as that of an Indian yogi is a childlike joy in life as simple as that of which Wordsworth sang.

On the one hand, Jesus taught his disciples that they were not to lay up for themselves treasures on earth, but in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon,"

he declared unto them. He bade the rich young ruler to give away his wealth in alms and follow him. It is easier, we read, for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven; the only hope for him is in the mercy of God. Jesus' disciples were taught that for food and drink and clothing they must simply trust the Lord. They were to love their enemies and turn the other cheek to him who smote the one. They were to invite to their homes only those who could not return the hospitality. Jesus warned everyone who would follow him that he must count the cost. No turning back was allowed even to bury one's parent. Nay more, if the demand comes, he must be ready to hate his own father and mother.

There is a violent radicalism in such words as these which the most ingenious exegesis cannot soften down. Converting the needles' eyes of Jesus into city gates may show learning but it does not show appreciation of the Master's spirit. The fair-minded reader must acknowledge that Tolstoi interprets such passages as these more truly than the many who weaken them into inane moral platitudes. The trouble with Tolstoian exegesis is not so much in its wrong interpretation of certain sayings as in its failure to recognize both sides in the ethical paradox of the gospels. There is another aspect just as strongly emphasized as the one which we have been considering.

Unlike Paul, who had no eye for the beauties of nature, the Savior himself had a poet's delight in the natural world. The birds of the heaven, the lilies of the field, the ripening grain, the feeding sheep, all were good. He rejoiced in them as in the goodness of God. The apparent indifference of Nature, who sends her rain on the just and unjust alike, was to him only a manifestation of God's loving forbearance. He who taught "if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out," toiled to the point of exhaustion in caring for men's physical needs; he placed the wants of the body above the observance of the fourth commandment. The same Jesus who bade men lay up treasure in heaven, not on earth, was condemned as a wine-bibber and a glutton. One of the gospels opens the Savior's ministry amid the festivities of an oriental wedding celebration. Over against the command to the rich

young ruler to sell his possessions and give alms, is to be put his commendation of Mary in her extravagant use of precious ointment that might have been sold for the poor. Jesus evidently rejoiced in that Bethany home which did not lack its luxuries. If he told his disciples that they must be willing to hate father and mother, he guarded the sanctity of the home in absolute terms and he affectionately put his arms around the little children. This is God's world, not the devil's; the things of this world are good, its pleasures are good, they are all gifts of the heavenly Father and are to be received in joy and gratitude.

What relation shall this joy and gladness in life have to the stern renunciation of the world which is equally manifest in Jesus' life and teaching? Here has always been the great problem of Christian ethics. To meet it, the Roman church at an early date developed the theory of a double standard of morality; one standard for the great mass of people who do their duty as citizens in the world, but who can expect at the most only a bare entrance into heaven; and another for the few set aside to be priests. They must take the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and by so doing they lay up for themselves especial treasure in heaven. Great stress is laid by the Roman church on the words to the rich ruler as Matthew gives them: "If thou wouldst be *perfect*, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor." When the teachings of Jesus are taken in all earnestness, we must recognize how naturally this Roman double standard follows. In a modified form it has even been accepted by some protestant scholars. But ethics must have an absolute ideal if it is to retain its imperative quality. And it is hardly open to question today whether such a complete separation of the priest has not lowered instead of elevating him.

More modern is the attempt to appeal to the historical limitations of the world of Jesus. In agricultural Galilee, where people lived simply on the produce of soil and water, his position is explicable, we are told. Only when one seeks to apply his teaching to the complex social conditions of today does a paradox arise. It must be granted that the modern world is radically different from the ancient. Precepts cannot always be simply transferred from

one age to the other. Selling one's goods and giving to the poor is not now the best expression of a man's love to his neighbor. Many sayings of Jesus must be interpreted in the light of the particular circumstances which called them forth. Nevertheless, no study of local conditions in Palestine can remove the paradox which confronts us in the gospels. The difficulty is not anything arising out of temporary circumstances. The Sermon on the Mount seemed just as impracticable to those who first heard it as it does today. On the other hand, those apparently impossible demands of Jesus appeal to our age just as strongly as they did to his. Men have ever hesitated to accept them unreservedly, but they have never dared reject them. As Dr. Feine has put it, "they sink into our hearts as a thorn which we cannot tear out." They goad us on toward an ideal whose power over the human soul abides amid all vicissitudes of time. The gigantesque style of Jesus, so full of hyperboles and paradoxes, is a most inappropriate vehicle for setting forth laws and precepts, but how wonderfully effective in inspiring religious ideals! The difficulty, though, is not merely a literary or pedagogical one, for there are two contradictory ideals which the gospels seem to present.

Other scholars solve the problem by distinguishing sharply two different periods in Jesus' ministry. The note of joy and gladness, they say, dominated the earlier days while he went about among the villages of Galilee; the call to sacrifice and renunciation gained frequency as the shadow of the cross more and more darkened the horizon. Every reader of the Gospel of Mark must feel the change of atmosphere that begins with the confession of Peter in the eighth chapter. The bright skies are no more; the heavens, thenceforth, are black with storm clouds. But the gospels do not justify us in classifying all Jesus' sayings according to this change in the reception of his message. It is not a case of a dark cloth sewed on a bright one; strands of brightness and strands of darkness run through the whole fabric of his teaching. The shifting of outward circumstance was a result of Jesus' paradoxical attitude toward life, and only incidentally a cause.

In recent years a new school of gospel interpreters has arisen, the so-called eschatologists. They find the key which unlocks

the mysteries of the gospels in the apocalyptic hope of an approaching world-end. Thus interpreted, the gospels take on a strange, almost repellent aspect. The ethics of Jesus are then *interim* ethics, valid only for the short period before the Christ comes in his glory. Things of this world, though valuable in themselves, are to be avoided because the end is at hand. The Sermon on the Mount presents an eschatological piety, not an ideal for life here. Self-sacrifice is taught as a religious impulse and not a moral attitude. Love for enemies is only the highest proof of love for God and freedom from this world. The Christian is to turn the other cheek to him who smites, with no idea of shaming the wrong-doer, but rather as a heroic proof that he has conquered all dependence on the world. The Master's aim, according to this theory, was to have his disciples burn all bridges behind them and face coming death.

Recent study of apocalyptic literature has indeed thrown light on many obscure passages of the New Testament. We should readily grant that the current belief in an approaching world-end deeply affected the words of Jesus. The eschatologists have also done good service in bringing to the front the intensity of the moral tone in the gospels, the absoluteness of the contrast which Jesus makes between good and evil. No concessions qualify his words. Both the weakness of men and the limitations of social environment are ignored. The Master always speaks as one face to face with eternity. It is a stumbling-block to many Christians today that the belief in a proximate destruction of all things has so large a place in the New Testament. But without this outlook on life would it have been possible for an absolute moral message, good not only for one age but for all ages, to have been given and received? Would not Jesus' great principles have necessarily been smothered in concrete applications to temporary needs had not an eternal future free from human deficiencies been so vividly present in the thought of men? The Christ ideals had a chance to root themselves in the human heart before men's eyes were opened to the slow processes of realization. One may see value in this suggestion and yet find only a caricature of Jesus' teaching in a presentation like that of Albert Schweitzer. According to

such eschatologists as he, the gospels make the belief that the end of the world is near at hand the primary motive of conduct. Such a motive cannot be made dominant now and the gospel message in so far becomes inapplicable to our age. This view, however, is only possible when one emphasizes the abnegations of Jesus to the neglect of the joy in the world which stands side by side with them in the gospel records.

This one-sidedness is apparent in Christian ethics all through the centuries. Either men have found in Jesus an unreasonable asceticism—some to approve, others to reject—or else they have tamed down his radical expressions of self-denial and renunciation until they no longer disturb the world's self-complacency. Are we shut up to these alternatives? The example of Jesus is an everlasting witness to us that the two sides may be harmonized in personal experience without neglecting either phase. His life was, as Chesterton saw, a superhuman paradox where opposite passions blazed side by side. In his soul, childlike joyousness thrived beside utter self-renunciation; a submissiveness that could pray: "Thy will, not mine be done," beside a boldness that could ask to move mountains; a humility before which no service was too lowly, beside an authority which awed the multitudes. The moral supremacy of Jesus Christ is not in any merely negative sinlessness but in the perfect balance of these great antinomies of character. No interpretation of Jesus' moral teaching can prove satisfactory which does not do full justice to this paradoxical element. The question still presses, however, more insistently than ever, What was it in the personality of Jesus which bound together these divergent qualities into a unity? Some all-embracing motive there must have been.

When once the question is clearly put the answer comes of itself. It is the glory of the nineteenth century that that which was truly central in the life of Jesus is now recognized as central in Christianity—the Christ-spirit of love. The Sermon on the Mount is a presentation of the principle of love radically applied. Jesus did not place the motive of conduct in any fear of a proximate world-end, but expressly in a love which imitates God's love. The disciples were taught to love their enemies that they might be

children of the Highest, "for He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye merciful as your Father also is merciful."

Jesus lived like all of us in two worlds; a world of things and a world of ideals and persons. They are both God's worlds. He is supreme over both. Jesus, therefore, accepted the world of things with the joy of a child. It is a gift of the loving Father. There is that in Jesus' teachings which responds to the lines of Browning:

Let us not always say  
"Spite of this flesh today,  
I strove, made head, gained ground on the whole."  
As the bird wings and sings  
Let us cry: "All good things  
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh  
helps soul."

But the God from whom these gifts come was all in all to Jesus. When he saw men around him allowing the things to obscure God whose love gave them, there was no language too strong to express the renunciation he demanded. Worldly things are temporal, God and his will are eternal. Worldliness and riches were condemned only as they stood over against God and the divine attitude of love. Love is the strongest motive in the world to call forth extreme self-sacrifice, and the love of Jesus was deep enough to give up life itself and was broad enough to include even his foes. But there was nothing ascetic about it. What a difference there is between the Indian devotee, who throws himself under the wheels of the Juggernaut car to win a future salvation, and the death of Jesus on the cross to free mankind from the power of evil and of sin! Hindu self-abnegation is destructive of life and society, Christian sacrifice in loving service enlarges the life of the individual and builds up society. In such experience the antinomy between joy in the world and renunciation of the world disappears.

Men no longer live in expectation of an immediate world-end; the terrors of nature are gone; modern science has substituted for the demons that frightened our ancestors natural forces subject more or less to human control; even social problems formerly lumped all together and deemed hopeless are now analyzed into

separate tasks which can be accomplished, so that men already talk seriously about removing one of the oldest of human curses—poverty. “O dear, O dear,” cries Night, in *The Blue Bird*, “I cannot understand man these last few years . . . . Already he has captured a third of my Mysteries, all my Terrors are afraid, and dare not leave the house, my Ghosts have taken flight, and the greater part of my Sicknesses are ill.” This means that the fears which used to restrain man’s passions have lost their control. A great optimistic wave of freedom has swept over mankind, and pleasure is rampant. Will history repeat itself, and unrestrained pleasure-seeking now, as in the ancient world, waste away civilization’s accumulated energy and bring on again degenerate times when self-abnegation must necessarily be man’s highest ideal? Such a reaction is bound to come unless by the power of Christ-like love the mighty forces of our day can be bound together and held to righteous ends. This is the supreme task of the church of Jesus Christ in the twentieth century.



## THEOLOGY AND BIBLICAL CRITICISM

---

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
The University of Chicago

---

What is the outcome of biblical criticism for systematic theology? Scholars have been pursuing their investigations concerning text and date and authorship and historical setting until it is comparatively easy to know the status of scholarship on these points. But what does it involve for our theology? This is a practical question which has not yet received its final answer. Indeed, there exists a remarkable lack of agreement on this point. Some men are growing impatient of the leisurely way in which important questions are being discussed, and are vigorously demanding that criticism shall announce its "assured results" so that a new dogmatics may be established which shall not need to be revised. Others, observing the wide variety of opinions among the critics, insist that the whole critical movement is so pervaded with subjective vagaries that it cannot be trusted to yield any definite results. A few scholars who employ the critical method feel that no important changes in theology are necessary. Others insist that when the full implications of criticism are understood, far-reaching alterations will take place. Some men fear that if modern biblical scholarship is allowed to go its way unhampered by doctrinal restrictions, it will prove subversive of Christianity. Others believe that we have never yet known the real essence of Christianity, and that critical scholarship will purify and enrich our faith. In view of these conflicting opinions, it is not superfluous to ask just what the outcome of biblical criticism is in so far as it affects the task of the theologian.

It is the purpose of this article and of those which follow to inquire whither we are bound if we make positive use of the principles of critical scholarship. Just what difference does it make in the theologian's work if he recognizes the legitimacy of modern methods of biblical interpretation? What ought to be the con-

ception of the field and the task of systematic theology on the part of the one who welcomes criticism as a right and fruitful means of discovering the truth? Does it alter in any significant way the conception of the task which has hitherto prevailed? If so, what are the positive principles of constructive thinking which emerge?

At the outset of our inquiry, let us get rid of the feeling which is all too prevalent, that theology and scientific inquiry are necessarily hostile to each other. The past generation has, indeed, been so unfortunate as to witness a species of warfare which was largely due to the fact that neither science nor theology had quite "found itself" in our modern world. But the attitude of hostility which was so prominent in the last generation is not characteristic of all ages. The history of religious thinking reveals the fact that a theologian must use the scientific tools of his age for the organization of his thought. The man who translates the Bible from Hebrew and Greek must possess and use precisely the same linguistic skill and must adopt precisely the same critical processes as a translator of Homer or of Plato. The scholar who attempts to tell us what the apostle Paul meant in his arguments must use methods of interpretation which would also serve the expounder of Aristotle's philosophy. The systematic theologian who attempts to put in convincing form the religious convictions of Christian believers must employ the canons of logic demanded by the secular philosopher in expounding his system. If the theologian is to make himself intelligible at all, he must use the thought-processes with which his age is familiar. It is thus inevitable that he shall make positive use of the science of his day.

A single example taken from Christian history will illustrate this fact. It is customary today to poke fun at those theologians of the late Middle Ages whom we call "schoolmen" or "scholastics." It seems to us (in our ignorance of what they actually did) that they often were spending their time on barren questions of no importance to anyone. But they were really trying to set forth religious doctrines in terms of the science of the day, which they had learned from Aristotle's writings. We think the scholastic method uninteresting because we have abandoned the formal logical science which scholasticism embodied. When pupils in our schools no longer

memorize the *Barbara celarent* we can scarcely expect that a theology which proceeds by formal syllogisms will seem to them convincing. But this should not blind us to the fact that the schoolmen were genuinely scientific theologians in their day.

Now biblical criticism is simply the study of the Bible by the methods approved by modern science. How the word "criticism" is misunderstood! It is often assumed that a critical student of the Bible will proceed to find all the fault possible with the venerable book. "Higher critics" are thus sometimes portrayed as a class of disgruntled pessimists whose sole remaining pleasure in life is to destroy whatever last vestiges of authenticity have been left in the Bible. In their supposed superior wisdom they are imagined to be adequately described by the word "hyper-critic." The portrait thus drawn is anything but a lovely one; and a movement which can outlive the ridicule which has for a half-century been lavished upon biblical criticism has at least an amazing vitality.

But what is criticism? We feel no resentment at the art critic. On the contrary many of us pay for the privilege of attending his lectures. We feel that the Shakesperian critic merits the honorary degree which is perhaps conferred upon him for his researches. When by critical examination the atomic theory which we learned in our textbooks on chemistry is modified, we have only praise for the scientists who thus revise our doctrines. It belongs to the very nature of any scientific procedure to be "critical." One who adopts the methods of science in any realm must become a critic. That is, he must use his powers of discernment. He must not be satisfied with reading another man's statement. He must investigate and verify for himself, if he is to have any standing among modern scholars.

Now an axiom of this critical spirit of modern scholarship is that there can be no theories which are immune from re-examination. In the realm of natural science the doctrine of gravitation is, I believe, popularly thought to be absolutely established. But there are not wanting scientists who question the correctness of Newton's conclusions in certain particulars. In the field of biology Darwin's name is universally honored today. But no aspect of the science of biology is more perplexing to the layman than the wide

differences of opinion among specialists concerning some of Darwin's conclusions. The critical spirit means that every man has a perfect right to discredit traditional conclusions *if he can do it by scientific methods*. And there is nothing to prevent one from putting forth the most preposterous theories if he chooses. But whoever does so must remember that his new theory will have to run the gauntlet of critical scholarship. If it does not endure this test, the author of the theory loses the respect of his scientific colleagues. In the world of science a man is judged not so much by his conformity or nonconformity to established conclusions as by his fidelity to scientific method. Scientists who disagree can meet and argue with each other, all the time preserving the inquiring spirit which prevents denunciation. The fact of diversity in opinion is thus welcomed in the scientific world as a source of fruitful investigation.

It is then hardly creditable to one's intelligence if questioning in science is looked upon as honorable and desirable while questioning in theology is identified with disloyalty to truth. Yet the art critic or the literary critic or the critic of Darwinism is treated with respect, while the biblical critic is too often misunderstood and caricatured. The questioning of the scientist has been recognized as the preliminary essential to a surer understanding of the truth. The questioning of the biblical critic has been treated as if it were final, involving a denial of everything which is questioned. But the biblical critic, like the art critic, is simply attempting to investigate things carefully, in order to put human knowledge on a firmer basis. The simple recognition of this fact would prevent much confusion. It is true that just as vagaries in the field of art criticism are accepted as an inevitable accompaniment of freedom of research, so vagaries in biblical criticism must be expected as a by-product of the serious work of that science. But the scientific spirit holds that eventually the truth will be better established by letting every man have a free opportunity to question the theory of any other man. The dread of the disapproval of one's fellow-investigators can be relied upon to keep most scholars from rash excursions into absurd realms of theory. Biblical criticism, then, means that the same methods of investigation which in other

realms are believed to lead to the truth shall be applied in the study of the Bible.

It would seem that nothing but good could come of the application of such sober methods of inquiry to the Bible. Those who believe in the critical method of Bible-study are firmly convinced that only good does result. But the applications of modern biblical scholarship have brought about certain modifications in theological attitude which have been a source of real perplexity to many earnest and honest men. The reason for this perplexity, resulting, as it sometimes does, in distrust or denunciation of the entire process of criticism, we must understand, if we are to see rightly into the relation of theology to biblical criticism.

The older theologies were constructed by what is known as the "proof-text" method. It is true that this method has been employed by men who first made a careful study of the Bible, collecting the evidence in an inductive manner and building upon this induction their doctrinal conclusions. But there are not wanting examples of a more superficial use of biblical texts. If a man believed strongly a certain doctrine, he felt that it *must* be scriptural; consequently he was under the temptation of trying to make as good a showing as possible from the Scriptures. Such a theologian was likely to overlook and neglect those passages which made against his theory. The prevalence of this method of proof has led to the skeptical remark so often heard that "one can prove anything he chooses out of the Bible." When both total abstinence and moderate drinking, both emancipation and slavery, both Trinitarian and anti-Trinitarian appeal to the Bible, the layman may be forgiven for feeling that the ways of the theologian are past finding out. It is manifestly impossible to retain the confidence of men in theology if it comes to such varied conclusions without giving to those who are perplexed any clue as to the *method* by which the conclusions are reached. Biblical criticism undertakes to establish a method by which investigations may be made with the same expectation of reaching stable conclusions in biblical interpretation as in any other realm where scientific method has taken the place of unscientific assertion.

Now the primary question which the critical Bible student asks

is very different from the primary question which was asked by theologians in the past. The older theologian assumed that the purpose of Bible study was to ascertain directly what one ought to believe. But a very short examination reveals the fact that, whatever our method, it is not so easy to determine what biblical "truth" is. The suggestions of the tempter in the early chapters of Genesis can scarcely be said to embody "truth." The speeches of the friends of Job are pronounced untrue by the book itself. Paul's injunction to women to keep silence in the churches is not generally regarded as binding today. No one holds that one should literally cut off his hand when it does wrong, or pluck out the right eye. How many of us always give to any man that asketh, and turn not away from him who would borrow? The matter of finding what we ought to believe by a mere reading of the Bible is not so simple as it seems. Consequently, theologians have always been obliged to make discriminations within the Bible.

One means of discriminating was in ancient times formulated in what was then regarded as scientific method. This was the doctrine of a double or a triple or even a quadruple sense of Scripture. Early in the history of Christianity it was laid down as a rule that nothing discreditable to God could be in the Bible. Any statement, therefore, which seemed to be unworthy of God was not to be taken literally. It must be figuratively interpreted.

But how may we know whether to take a given passage of Scripture literally or figuratively? Unless we can discern some test of this, we are left to the vagaries of individual opinion. It is the recognition of the uncontrolled subjectivism of this allegorical method that has led modern scholars, following the spirit of Luther and Calvin, to discard the doctrine of a threefold or a fourfold sense of Scripture. So long as two scholars may take the same text and one may declare that it means one thing, while the other asserts that it means something entirely different, it is evident that no really scientific method of discovering the meaning of the Bible has been established. Modern biblical criticism holds that it ought to be just as possible for men to agree as to the meaning of the Bible as it is possible for them to agree concerning the motions of the stars or the constitution of a chemical substance. And the

method by which this desired certainty is to be attained is called biblical criticism.

The general principles of biblical criticism are too familiar to readers of the *Biblical World* to need extended explanation. There are two main tasks, one exactly technical, the other more vital and general. The technical task is undertaken by textual criticism, which seeks to ascertain so far as possible the exact text of the books of the Bible. During the long centuries when copies of the biblical books were made by hand, many variations in the text appeared. This task of textual criticism is so complicated that it requires a special training in order to be able to estimate the relative value of different readings.

So far as systematic theology is concerned the consequences of textual criticism are comparatively slight. The theologian cannot, indeed, maintain the absolute correctness of any specific reading of a doubtful passage. In most cases, however, the variation is of minor importance so far as doctrine is concerned. Yet the question whether Paul ever called Jesus God is made doubtful by uncertainty as to punctuation in one crucial text. The famous saying in II Timothy concerning the inspiration of Scripture is translated in three different ways by scholars, on account of doubt as to grammatical construction. A Syriac text of Matthew declares Joseph to be the father of Jesus. Is this reading more authentic than the Greek text underlying our accepted versions? Just what words did Jesus speak in establishing the Lord's Supper? These are some of the questions upon which a defensible conclusion is bound up with the problem of knowing what the authentic text is. Still, as has been said, the variations are not usually of sufficient importance to demand serious changes in our interpretation of biblical doctrine.

The other branch of criticism—the so-called “Higher Criticism”—is less exactly technical, but is quite as difficult. It is concerned to discover the literary and historical genesis of the books of the Bible, in order that we may better comprehend what they mean. For example, it is almost impossible adequately to understand the content of the books of the prophets unless one is able to interpret them in their historical setting. Then we can see what allusions

mean, and can appreciate the message of the prophets. When we read the contents of the priestly ritual without reference to the circumstances which produced the law, we have merely a mass of statistics. But when we see the way in which that law served to hold the nation fast to the religious ideal of holiness which the prophets had proclaimed, we appreciate the spiritual significance of this attempt to make all the life of the Jew consecrated to Jehovah. When we read the Epistle to the Hebrews without regard to the circumstances which brought it into existence, we are likely to be puzzled by the elaborate argument drawn from priests and sacrifices. But when we picture a group of Christians, discouraged by persecution and weary of waiting for the triumph of the kingdom which was so long delayed, thinking perhaps that after all they had been mistaken in adopting Christianity, the elaborate arguments to show how much better Christ is than the best that Hebrew religion had produced gain new meaning. When we try to derive from the Book of Revelation specific predictions of history in our day so that we may ascertain the exact date of the end of the world, we are likely to become confused by the visions and beasts and symbols. But when we know something of the apocalyptic hopes of the Jews and early Christians, we can see how this book of splendid visions would serve to encourage those who were disheartened by persecution. It thus is of great importance for the right understanding of the books of the Bible to know the dates and circumstances of their composition.

These critical attempts to estimate the significance of a book of Scripture by appreciating the religious problems which called it forth have certain important consequences for the theologian. The item which has attracted most public attention—viz., change of theory as to authorship—is really of little significance, so far as the theologian is concerned. The contents of the Twenty-third Psalm remain the same whether David wrote it or whether, as seems to be implied in the words, “I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever,” the author lived after the temple existed. The Book of Leviticus, with its elaborate descriptions of tabernacle and priestly service, is just as foreign to our way of regarding religion if Moses wrote it, as it is if it comes from post-exilic times. In



fact, those questions which are of primary interest to the critical student are often of little or no consequence to the systematic theologian. Thus much of the controversy which rages between conservative and radical scholars in the realm of biblical criticism may be ignored by the systematic theologian. His business is to set forth Christian convictions; and conclusions as to the date or authorship of a book can hardly be classified as either Christian or non-Christian.

So far as theology is concerned the real significance of biblical criticism, then, is not to be found so much in its technical conclusion as in a change of view as to the way in which any biblical message is to be interpreted. Instead of seeking to derive directly from a scriptural utterance a decisive answer to our modern theological problems, the critical scholar attempts rather to discover what problems were present in the mind of the biblical writer, and what answers to the questionings of his heart he discovered. The determination of date and authorship is only preliminary to an understanding of the historical significance of the book in question. If, for example, the last chapters of Isaiah were written by the prophet who wrote the first portion, we must interpret the passages concerning Cyrus and events in his time as the result of miraculous foresight on the part of a prophet who lived two centuries before the events which he prophesied took place. The statements which he makes must have come in some mysterious way out of an unknown realm. But if, as is now generally believed among scholars, the book was written by a contemporary of Cyrus, or even at a later date, it becomes possible to interpret it as an expression of religious aspiration and insight growing directly out of the bitter experiences of Israel. So, too, the Book of Daniel, if dated in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, must be viewed as an essentially magical prevision. If it came from the Maccabean period, its message is seen to be vitally related to the religious problems of the time.

In short, the modern biblical student is not satisfied with biblical statistics. He is not content to know what doctrines are in the Bible. He desires to feel also something of the glow of religious conviction which gave to the doctrine its power. He

wishes to share in imagination the indignation of Amos at the corruption of his day, to have his soul thrilled with the Isaiah of the Exile at the vision of a people so purified through suffering and discipline that God calls them his elect to bring the gentiles unto him. He attempts to reproduce sympathetically that intense longing for holiness on the part of the later Israelites which led to the elaboration of the Levitical cultus. And if he succeeds, if he can feel himself one in spirit with the biblical interpreter of some crisis of history, he gains a sense of reality which arouses a new wonder at the majesty of the biblical messages. The Bible has become a new and living book to thousands in our day just by this process of historical interpretation.

But this very sense of reality means that the utterances of a given author gain their religious power from their connection with specific historical conditions. And historical conditions change. The religious interpretation of history at one time may not suit another time. We may follow Isaiah with the keenest sympathy as he strives to reassure Israel by asserting the inviolability of the Temple at Jerusalem. Then, a century later, when Jeremiah denounces as false prophets those who repeat this earlier message of Isaiah, we may with equal zeal do homage to the courageous soul of the man who dared to face the changes which a hundred years had brought and in the light of these to reverse the judgment of an earlier prophet. We may find ourselves with hearts beating higher as we live over in imagination the scenes of primitive Christianity when religious fervor and courage were kept up by the apocalyptic expectation of the miraculous consummation, and yet may realize that history did not fulfil the hopes of those early followers of Christ. In other words, the modern Bible student has learned to think of the biblical utterances, not as timeless truths, but as living convictions of men who lived under definite historical circumstances. The theology of the Bible is a theology framed to meet definite problems called forth by the exigencies of specific historical conditions. The theology is addressed to that particular situation, and gains its vitality from its ability to lift men's hearts to new courage as they face their peculiar problems. But if the situation changes, the message also must change. If new problems arise in

the experience of men new solutions become imperative. Thus we find in the Bible a changing theology as the needs of men change.

It is this discovery of a changing theology in the course of the biblical history which makes impossible the retention of the older theological practice of treating scriptural statements as if they were timeless and absolute expressions of truth. Moreover, the perception of an evolution in the biblical literature is only a specific application of the larger recognition of the fact that human history is continually in the process of change and adjustment. The ideas which seem absolutely true to one age appear inadequate to a later time. The doctrines which in one century are potent means of arousing high aspirations may in a later century have lost their power. If it was impossible for Jeremiah to approve the reiteration of Isaiah's message in his day, we see that even the word of an inspired prophet is subject to temporal limitations.

Thus the outcome of higher criticism is something more important than a revision of traditional opinions about dates and authorship. It leads us straight into the realm of historical interpretation as contrasted with dogmatic interpretation. One who has accepted the principles of higher criticism finds that the very process of discovering the literary genesis of the books of the Bible makes him aware that the literature which he is studying is a record of genuinely human experience, and that the convictions contained in it were wrought out by actual wrestling with fundamental problems of life. As one traces the history of the experience portrayed in the biblical books, one becomes aware that a virile theology was never produced merely by the repetition of an authorized message, but that, on the contrary, the greatest books of the Bible owe their origin to a determined attempt to find an adequate expression for a living faith in opposition to a dead formalism. The great prophets of Israel and the apostle Paul were violent nonconformists.

The message of the Bible therefore appears in a fundamentally altered perspective because of the processes of historical interpretation. The utterances of prophet and apostle are no longer viewed as finished doctrines which may be appropriated by us just as they stand. The Scriptures rather reveal to us the mighty

upheavals and the determined struggles of a living faith. One who has come to realize the significance of this point of view will inevitably seek to ascertain the problems which confront men of a given age before attempting to give an accurate account of the theology of that age. Thus the center of gravity is shifted from the outer aspects of doctrine to the inner aspects of religious experience. The key to the understanding of the biblical theology lies less in a theory of inspiration than in an adequate understanding of the thoughts and fears and hopes of men who faced the crises portrayed in the books of the Bible. The critical scholar must be constantly on his guard against assuming that a writer in biblical times will have had the same religious ideas as men in the twentieth century. He must gain as accurate a picture as possible of the actual problems with which the ancient writer was grappling. Only thus can he do justice to the messages of the Bible.

But this means that when the message of a biblical writer has been discovered, it will not necessarily be a universally valid doctrine. It will portray convictions which grew out of a very definite historical situation. For example, the prophets of Israel lived at a time when history was apparently disproving the national belief that Israel should be the supreme nation of the world. The discovery that mighty Assyria on the one hand and ancient and formidable Egypt on the other were counting for vastly more in contemporary history than was the little people sandwiched in helplessly between these two world-powers—this fact must be constantly put in the background of the messages of the earlier prophets. The theology of the prophets, therefore, is primarily and directly a message to a people whose political future is doomed. Can a nation's God permit his nation to perish? If so, what does it mean? This is the problem which the prophets of Israel attempt to answer in their theology. Now to transfer that theology bodily to another age with its different national problems is manifestly impossible.

Another instance of this difference between biblical problems and modern problems is to be found in the eschatological hopes of the early Christians. In order to understand the references to the second coming of Christ, one must appreciate how the often-

disappointed expectations of the Hebrew people that they would become politically supreme in the world had led to the belief that humanly speaking such triumph was impossible. But their indomitable belief in the fidelity of God to his promises had taken expression in the belief that God in a miraculous way would put an end to this evil age in which his people were oppressed, and would establish on earth a kingdom from heaven under the sway of his chosen Messiah. It was the persistence of this Jewish belief in the minds of followers of Christ that led to the emphasis in the New Testament on the second coming of Christ. When we read the eschatological passages of the apostolic writings against this background, we can see the tremendous influence which these visions would possess in fortifying them against persecution and discouragement. To be able to feel that the Lord would soon come to put down the powers of evil meant that the hardships of the day could be endured with fortitude. But to transfer bodily to our own day these millennial hopes means to encourage such movements as that of the Millerites in the past century, who prepared their ascension robes so as to be ready on the given day. It means that the numbers in the Book of Revelation will be made the basis of elaborate computations so that one may have the certainty that the end of the world will come on a given date. The biblical student must read these passages with a sympathetic understanding of the hopes and beliefs of the first century. The systematic theologian must do his work in a century to which the eschatological visions are foreign. Here, again, a simple transfer of doctrine from ancient times to modern is out of the question.

It is therefore evident that one who adopts the critical method of studying the Bible will find himself led to the conclusion that theological doctrines cannot be treated as "truths" existing independently of religious experience. Religious convictions are answers to the questions which earnest men ask when confronted with serious issues. To learn the answer to a question without knowing the exact nature of the question itself is a proceeding as formal as it is superfluous. The attempt of expositors to relate biblical doctrines to the questions which men were asking in biblical times inevitably affects the work of the systematic theologian.

He, too, must accurately define the questions which men are asking in his day if his answers are to be pertinent. To preserve a vital relation between theology and life is the plain duty of the theologian who really understands the nature of the biblical utterances.

Now it requires only a little reflection to see that the problems which confront men of the twentieth century are likely to be quite different from those which men of the first century were compelled to meet. Indeed, one of the conspicuous features of present-day theological activity is the attempt to adjust theology to the vital experiences of men today. To write theology for the "modern mind" is a favorite enterprise. It is seen that only as doctrines shall actually help men to answer the questions in which they are interested can they preserve the function which biblical utterances fulfilled. The most important outcome of biblical criticism is the recognition of the supreme importance of this fundamental aspect of theology. But when this conception of the task of theology is clearly apprehended, it will inevitably lead to a method of theological study which shall seek to do complete justice to present-day religious conditions. Some aspects of this new task will be considered in subsequent articles.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE AT AMHERST

---

PROFESSOR JOHN FRANKLIN GENUNG, PH.D., D.D.  
Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.

---

Two embarrassing problems confront me as I essay to describe the religious life in Amherst College. The first and more formidable comes from the baffling difficulty, not to say futility, of putting into categorical terms a thing which, in proportion as it is inward and genuine, is too reticent to respond to the rude invasion of analysis and statistics. One must be involved in the hidden spirit of such life to feel its values; and even then one's reply to curious inquiries must be much like the answer once made to a request for a definition of some great elemental truth, "I know when you do not ask me." The other rises from the fact that Mr. Fitch, in his article on "Religious Life at Harvard,"<sup>1</sup> has described conditions so similar to those at Amherst that we could almost take his account for ours, changing merely the names and some details about methods and appliances. The problem left to me, accordingly, is largely that of making an acceptable variation on a theme already so ably handled.

For the similarity of conditions at Harvard and Amherst, and indeed in all the New England colleges, it is not hard to account. The bewildering changes of religious sentiment during the last half-century have not changed the essential fiber of the New England mind. We still inherit the vital breath of New England Puritanism; we are still heirs of that New England conscience which, however uncomfortable a thing to have in the house, will not consent to die out of the age without rendering strict account. Our students come indeed from all sections of the country, where all varieties of religious doctrine prevail; but in great proportion they trace proudly to New England ancestry, and coming here to college is like coming to headquarters, to the old-home atmosphere. An influence not easy to describe, deriving from a sturdy past,

<sup>1</sup> *The Biblical World*, March, 1912, p. 151.

and steadfast under the shifting tides of thought and criticism, a kind of rock-bottom which goes unmentioned simply because it is taken for granted, may be felt, and strongly, by a wise and sympathetic "discerner of spirits." I am inclined to think that in these times of unrest we do not sufficiently reckon with the sub-conscious element of religion. We see the agitation and get scared because our grandmothers (of both sexes) are, and we lose our heads; or else we try to carry off our brand-new views in an uneasy bravado; and so we forget, for the time being, that these estranging waves of doctrine are after all on the surface, while the ocean of religious faith and character, as defined in Christian terms (and these among the newest), is nineteen centuries old.

A time of religious and philosophical stress, such as the last fifty years have been undergoing, must necessarily be a time to try men's souls. How deep its influence is, or how pervasive, does not appear in men's demeanor or conversation; for we know how instructive is the impulse to hide or disguise one's most sacred feelings. I sometimes think that such a season of stress, imposed by the unescapable spirit of the age, is the modern equivalent of persecution. It is a test of the stuff that is in a man; and it leaves him, to the degree in which it has laid hold on him, either a craven or a martyr. But this tribute is due to our wholesomely earnest time, that the martyrdom it induces is made forever honorable: it is divested of its grewsome connotations and reverts to the original idea of steadfast witness-bearing. And its most fundamental element, perhaps, is simple staying-power; the oracle of Habakkuk, that the righteous shall live in his faithfulness, is realized anew. In this, too, the grounded spirit of race and place has its part; an inherited idea, long ago planted in faith, is sub-consciously working there.

For the forms and services of religion at Amherst, we may best bear in mind, perhaps, with necessary modifications, the simple usages of the New England parish church; not unmindful of the fact that in its noble day it was the unquestioned arbiter, in matters spiritual, alike of family and community. We have not jumped hastily to conclude that its day is past; nor have we grasped feverishly to adopt innovations without having a clear



idea not only what to free ourselves *from* but what new thing to commit ourselves *to*. "No man having drunk old wine desireth new; for he saith, 'The old is good.'" At the same time, I am persuaded this calm conservatism is by no means synonymous with stagnation, or what uneasy critics call "cold storage." The agencies of religious expression are there: as sound, as vital, as adequate, as they have ever been; it remains merely for the individual soul to appropriate them. Accordingly, we retain the daily chapel service, with required attendance, corresponding to the old New England family worship, but projected to the college scale; we have the college church, with attendance also required, at which preachers from prominent pulpits of the land, of various denominations and in generous proportion alumni of Amherst, bring from the greater world the spirit of the cause they have at heart, as adapted to the mind and ideals of young men. Quite generally these ministers, in addition to their pulpit services, are called upon by the students themselves to address them more informally in some of the public rooms of the college, or to visit groups of students in their fraternity homes. Such is the simple machinery of our religious activities; in which while administrative prescription maintains the same responsibility as in other matters, free and full scope is open to student initiative. And the student initiative is as wholesomely taken as accorded: a leavening influence in the student body, and productive of much light and inspiration from the men of noble leading whom we are privileged to hear and with whom we may converse. From their places on the firing-line of the world's battle they come, just as men of other callings come from theirs, and we avail ourselves according to our good will of their wisdom and uplift.

Of course, where religious observances are prescribed, and especially if these are outside the Episcopal or Catholic order, they must be exposed to the unconsidered and more or less ephemeral fluctuations of student sentiment, which moves so easily to the spiritual ebbs and flows of the times. If in the general tone of things the student mood becomes a little soured or staled, the required religious attendance is one of the surest things to take its attack. It is a very convenient college barometer. Its vulnerable

point is so obvious; you can hit it with your eyes shut and your reason quite in abeyance. Religion cannot be legislated, anyone can say. True enough; neither can the neglect or scorn of religion, and for that matter, neither can scholarship be legislated. The man whose momentary spleen or laziness prompts him to say to the required observance, "What business have you to make me religious?" has the selfsame right—and all too frequent occasion—when the college course is over, to come back on his Alma Mater and say, "Why didn't you make me a scholar?" To which the college can only answer, "There are your opportunities, scholarly and religious, and if we, the college, choose not to put them at the mercy of uneasy sentiment, to maintain or abolish, perhaps in the long run you may find it was just as well to have something on which you could surely count, whether you would profit by it or not."

All this about surface sentiment, however, is not of my true subject, but a digression. It reveals the negative side, indeed, the disposition not to identify religion with routine; and in every community, college or other, are those who stop with the negative and will not go forward constructively to identify their religion—at least under that name—at all. What proportion of such there is at Amherst, no one can tell; we have to leave the question where St. Paul left it in his day, when, sure that "the firm foundation of God standeth," he could only point to its double seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and, "Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness." The true religious life at Amherst, its essential fiber, is a thing not of fluctuations and recoveries but of growth, the healthy growth of our expanding time, with relatively small admixture of its evils and paralyzing denials. Thirty years of conversance with it entitle me, I think, to say this with firm confidence. In our somewhat cloistered undergraduate life, out of the currents of religious controversies and criticisms, we are not in position minutely to prove all things; but neither have we suffered ourselves to stand still or fall behind; the disposition rather is to keep pace with the times, not in the attitude of denial or indifference, but holding fast that which is good, pre-eminently the good that

impinges upon life as we are living it, in the active, care-free, forward-looking period of youth. It is a religion not demonstrative in religious terms, and indeed reticent about calling itself religion at all, but habitually mindful of what belongs practically to the soundest manhood ideals.

To enlarge on this would be but to enlarge on the movement of the age itself. We all know what a tremendous transformation the last thirty years have witnessed in men's religious ideas. The double seal of St. Paul's "firm foundation of God" has appeared in wonderful enlargement and clarity of meaning. There have been revealed so many ways, outside of the dogmatic and ecclesiastical, of being in some authentic degree the Lord's, so many ways of departing from unrighteousness without joining the church or even naming the divine name, that men have almost lost their old-time church bearings, and deem that with the light and impulse they have they can shift for themselves. Of course in this, as in every strong movement, there is a myopic element; they are not giving the church its due; while at the same time they are translating the thing for which the church has always stood into business and social terms. Their Christ is the Son of Man who, if becoming less palpably historic, is becoming more identified with present manhood. And in the wholesome feeling of that identity manhood itself is being more deeply and tolerantly explored; manhood as projected to mankind, with universal brotherhood coming in sight. Such is the tremendous idea, or rather movement, which in our latest time is discovering its essential identity with religion. It is not the worship of man; it is rather the faith and hope and love of the highest, as expressed in human terms.

To respond by a cryptic sympathy to such an age-pulsation as this, and to give it expression in the college idiom, must result of course in a very different atmosphere and tone of things from what used to prevail in the old-time evangelistic and prayer-laden days of the church. Different, I say; whether more or less congenial to religion can be determined only when the broader definition of religion, now evolving, stands out clear and full. Meanwhile some of the venerable religious customs and expressions have atrophied and disappeared. Not many years ago the stated

weekly prayer-meeting died, not without causing pain to many, as if a safeguard of religious life were removed. Fast-day, a long-established observance, is only a dim tradition; and the annual day of prayer for colleges is rapidly becoming such. It cannot be ascertained that the discontinuance of these quasi-official institutions was owing in any smallest degree to an invasion of unfaith or impiety. And in their place a vigorous Young Men's Christian Association, with a resident graduate secretary, is devoting itself to a variety of organized Christian work, in the way of boys' clubs, neighborhood preaching and teaching, evening classes, work among foreigners, study of missions, inquiry into social conditions and settlement work, and the like—the list is too long to name. In all these voluntary activities the most striking thing, as compared with old times, is what may be called the reversal of the spiritual current: instead of laboring to secure their own personal salvation, the effort is to save others, nor that alone, as if it were passing the desire for salvation a step farther along the line, but to make others in their turn saviors and helpers. It is a reversal from the inward and self-regarding current to the outward and dynamic, as expressed in the impulse to service and brotherliness. The fact that these activities so largely take social, educational, and athletic forms, instead of evangelistic, is not to be urged seriously against them; these forms are in fact coming to be the practical religion of the age, and the young men are in encouraging degree responding to the influence.

Space would not permit me to enumerate the noble personal influences that throughout Amherst's history have wrought to keep the religious allegiance sound and true, nor is it in the power of language adequately to estimate it. To name the older names—Stearns, Seelye, Tyler, Crowell—leaving others out, would run the risk of being invidious; to mention names of men still at their post, a steady inspiring and constructive power, would not be to their desire or taste. Yet two names, however, of men recently removed by death, must not go unmentioned: Professor Garman, of rare teaching genius, whose philosophy, still perpetuated, is pre-eminently a Christian philosophy; and Dr. Hitchcock, venerable counselor and comrade, whose labors in physical education were

emphatically a religion put into manly health and action. Their works do follow them. We see it in the general tone of manliness, courtesy, refinement of demeanor, honor in class and game, regard for highest values in idea and fact, and not least, a healthy resiliency of spirit, which brings men back from the occasional lapses and mistakes which occur in all college communities to the saner view and resolve. How truly these have their springs in a deep-laid religious principle need not be subject of inquiry; they speak for themselves. Such are not fruits of a perverse or un-Christian spirit.

One thing, however, you will not find at Amherst. If there is any person conspicuous by his absence, it is the religious prig. The student does not cherish his religion, such as he has, for show or for market value. The Pharisaic, or the tenderly pious, or those whose religion has only a Biblical vocabulary, might not easily discover that he has any religion at all. It certainly is not greatly in evidence in a college yell, or at a bonfire. Nor much more demonstrative it is, at least under that name, in personal profession. The reaction against whatever smacks of the self-righteous, or the hypocrite, or the ascetic saint, makes it slow to assert itself. But this does not necessarily connote scorn or depravity; it is just as likely to coexist with the cherishing of a sacred treasure too precious to be handled and pawed about for public exhibition. One can respect such a feeling; one can forgive the man if by a kind of inverted hypocrisy he poses for worse than he is. For the very pose may be the homage of the consciously imperfect to an ideal too great to measure. And into such an ideal the religion of our age, overflowing the old creedal and ecclesiastical limits, is expanding.

On the whole, the steadfast sentiment that seems to prevail at Amherst, that lies hidden under student joys and gaieties, and that reasserts itself after fluctuations of mood have come and gone, is that religion is simply the highest value of life, a calm dynamic to be applied, not to remote dogmas and speculations, but to the duty that lies nearest and the ideal that rises clearest.

## THE MESSAGE OF JESUS TO THE YOUNG MEN OF TODAY

---

PRESIDENT RUSH RHEES, LL.D.  
University of Rochester, Rochester, N.Y.

---

### I

"The stone which the builders rejected the same was made the head of the corner" (Mark 12:10). The first lesson in the message of Jesus to our day is an object-lesson. The politicians of Jesus' day found him a dangerous disturber of established order. The ardent zealots found him a quiet advocate of natural development in the growth of a kingdom of righteousness. The orthodox teachers condemned him as heretical. The devotees of religious regularity turned aside from the Friend of publicans and sinners. And yet a century had not passed before this disturber, this quietist, this heretic, this contemner of tradition and custom, had gradually risen above all the influences which opposed and despised him into the place of supreme leadership and masterhood over men. Jesus cannot be classified simply as a historic character. From the first Easter Day until these latest times he has been a presence rather than a holy voice long since silenced. Withdrawn from the sight and hearing of man, he has maintained throughout the centuries a spiritual captaincy which multitudes acknowledge who find the formulas of theology a hopeless tangle or an archaic battle of phrases. The greatest leaders of men have owned themselves outdone by this Galilean. Crowns and thrones have perished, kingdoms have risen and waned. But Jesus is still the highest attainment our humanity has made. He is the perennial challenge to young men to behold and see what highest manhood means, what assured success is like.

### II

The perfect obedience to his Father's will, the unquestioning trust, the ethical piety, the other-worldliness, which characterized the religion which Jesus lived, give resonance, and richness, and

far-reaching power to the words which expressed his direct message to man. Down the centuries those words ring, sounding from the height on which his acknowledged pre-eminence has placed him, with ever richer and more insistent imperative. Yet still the imperative rests, as it did of old, on the authority of simple ethical and religious self-evidence. In the warning against Mammon worship and anxiety concerning material things, he taught his Galilean hearers: "Seek ye chiefly God's kingdom and his righteousness." Oftentimes since, as in his own day, men have sought to identify their own insistent desires and hopes and ambitions with that supreme object of man's seeking—God's kingdom. Zealots dreamed of triumph over Rome. Visionaries thought on a world-cataclysm, and fulfilled ambitions. Churchmen have time and again identified that kingdom with their special ecclesiastical organization. And today many restless spirits, yearning for social betterment, hear the Master's word and think of this or that utopian scheme.

But the message of Jesus is other than any of these misapprehensions of it, though it is addressed to the very heart of each of these ardent desires. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Luke 17:20). It is the result of a quiet working of leaven in life's lump. What that leaven is Jesus' own life most clearly showed—the leaven of simple, perfect obedience, of supreme and controlling regard for that in our human life which shows that we are children of God, who is Spirit.

Today, as never before, the things seen and temporal are asserting their claim to man's supreme regard. They are more astounding in their range and the promise they give of power and enjoyment than ever before. They are claiming the attention of men's serious philosophic and scientific curiosity as never before. They are obscuring for many men the significance of those interests in life which we call spiritual, as never before. And yet the soul's hunger and thirst after righteousness was never more poignant. The quest for truth, for justice, for brotherhood makes tremendous appeal. These undercurrents of desire, high and exalting, are the evidence of the leaven in the lump. For of these desires Jesus is alike the stimulus and the satisfaction. He sought supremely

God's kingdom. His meat was to do God's will. His command simply vocalized his example. His triumphant exaltation to the highest place our manhood conceives for itself is the confession of the ages that man is a spirit, and should rule the body and the world in which he lives, bringing them under control of the will of the Eternal Spirit.

### III

The doing of the will of God is extremely simple, even though it be supremely difficult. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:30, 31). The bane of religion is tradition and crystallized ceremony. So Jesus found it. So all ages find it. This message of Jesus was not new. He read it in the Law. But it needed the new affirmation which he gave it. To the youth of our day there is something deeply satisfying in the rich social character of these commands. They assure him that the quest of the spiritual kingdom will not call him afar from the world and its need. The parable of the Samaritan is the clear anchor which holds the follower of Jesus in the world, there to work out—as Jesus did—his loving obedience to God, and his loving service of his fellows.

Here also, not the word alone, but supremely the word as the echo of the everyday walk and conversation of Nazareth's great Carpenter, brings his message to the eager, earnest, reality-loving youth of today.

### IV

Toward the end of his public ministry, as hostility began to be more pronounced, and the disciples were perplexed about many things, Jesus repeatedly said to them, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20, cf. Mark 11:23). No one of those who heard dreamed of giving literal meaning to the removal of mountains. The mountains of human opposition, misunderstanding, and hatred presented hindrances far more serious than any mass of earth and rock. It was in face of such spiritual



difficulties that Jesus said, "If ye have faith . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you."

This faith of which he spoke when troubles gathered thickest about him was and is also the message of his life to men of today and all days. It was with him the simple corollary of perfect obedience. In the great temptation he declined either to test God or to distrust him. Throughout his life he took the path of love to God and love to man in place of all misunderstanding of men who could not adjust themselves to so simple and so exacting a standard. And although the path led to a cross, he followed it, to find that cross the opportunity for supreme obedience, supreme love to men, and supreme exaltation. It proved not an obstacle, but an opportunity. "Therefore also God highly exalted him" (Phil. 2:9).

Every disciple of Jesus needs like faith, though no like obstacle stands across his path. The young man of today needs such faith, for the whole clamor of our money-getting, pleasure-craving life cries out upon the spirit's quest of obedience to the searching, simple law of love to God and brotherhood to man. But Jesus' word, echoed with a thousand reverberations from his triumphant life, declares that such obedience is possible and is good. It needs but faith.

If faith is the corollary as well as the prerequisite of the perfect obedience, the first corollary of faith is patience. Not patience with evil, but with the time God's work must take if it is to penetrate life to its roots and establish his kingdom in its triumph. Jesus' word "It is finished" is the highest utterance of faith and trust, for it committed to the future and God's good time the work for which he gave his life—not in resignation, but in confidence. "He saw of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied" (Isa. 53:11).

## V

The simplicity and the strong ethical directness of Jesus necessitate good heed by us all to a final word in his message: "By their fruits ye shall know them . . . not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:16, 21). Faith,

loyal and patient; love to God and to neighbor; supreme seeking of God's kingdom: these are as leaves on a barren tree, except as godly conduct proves them to be living realities.

This ultimate appeal to conduct is Jesus' strongest appeal to a generation intent upon reality: even as it is his merciless rebuke for religion that expends itself in pious feelings and performances. This ultimate appeal to conduct is also Jesus' strongest appeal to the spiritual life which he awakens within us, for godly conduct is that life's fruitage; its root lies there; all its springs are in God.

The finality of conduct, the power of faith, the simplicity of duty, the supremacy of the concerns of the spirit, these are the chief messages of Jesus to young men today. And they are made concrete and definite now, as they were for Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom near Capernaum, by the Master's all-inclusive summons: "Follow me."

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE

## A CONSTRUCTIVE STUDY

### I. THE METHOD OF APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE LIFE

---

PROFESSOR HERBERT ALDEN YOUTZ, PH.D.  
Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N.Y.

---

In seeking for a constructive statement of the Christian conception of a future life, the matter of rational method is of first importance. The nature and value of our conclusions will be largely relative to the thought-method which controls our formulations. The reality and grip of our doctrine must depend upon the assent given to our controlling principles. This paper aims to attend somewhat explicitly to our method of approach.

All of the great catholic doctrines of religion may be regarded as expressions of the vital beliefs in terms of which the race interprets the world of life and experience, and shapes the course of society. Convictions, beliefs, faiths are our affirmations of the nature of reality, the forces which make for human progress. They are functions of life. The history of belief shows that they arise out of the constitutional needs of personal life, and they are shaped by the changing needs of developing life. The organic unity of life is such that the fundamental needs and the fundamental doctrines interpreting and administering to these needs are easily and truly viewed in their unity. Thus, we believe in God; we are religious. These affirmations express great human facts of belief, in which the race is one. But this conceptual unity breaks up into the greatest variety when we study these primary facts in the concrete. The unity is an ideal unity, expressed in the greatest complexity. For example, the term "religion" covers a great diversity of phenomena ranging from the crudest and most indefinite to those which are developed, profound, and definite. And the belief in God which lies at the heart of all religion proves

on examination to have no simple and constant content. The meanings both of "God" and of "believe" vary in such a range of diversity between the simple and the sublime, the impulsive and the deliberate, the superstitious and the rational and moral, that the homogeneity of religious belief is less apparent than the heterogeneity. And yet there is a profound sense for the understanding in which we must always maintain the unity of the phenomena of worship.

The belief in the future life is one of these persistent racial phenomena. Through shocks, through metamorphosing types of interpretation, trampled by harsh outbreaks of skepticism, the root of the belief in immortality has survived. Forever it rises up within the human consciousness as either a disowned specter from a childish age, a "pleasing hope," or a confident conviction.

The doctrine, wherever found, has this ideal unity, that it links men, in thought, with a world of reality other than the space and time world where our history is being enacted. It looks backward, or upward, or forward; it looks outward or inward, and it awakens a thought of life and a world of reality not limited by our present time and sense experience. It is a larger world than we know. Is this native conception a baseless dream, or an item of certain knowledge? And under what form shall we conceive it? What is its rational justification?

The problem is confused and complicated by the historic forms in which it has found expression. Like other great human beliefs, its unity threatens to disappear in the complexity in which it is involved. There is no clear teaching anywhere, but confusion, contradictions, and endless variety of belief and unbelief. Clear and unequivocal teaching is the one thing that is denied us by the history. In the absence of any clear and final teaching touching the total data, it is evident that the method by which we grasp the problem in its variety and unity will be of prime importance. Our meaning and our confidence will be relative to the confidence which we give to our comprehensive method of dealing constructively with the whole history. Moreover, without such a preliminary grasp of directive principles of interpretation, we shall almost surely land in some form of irrational dogmatism, or equally

irrational skepticism. What is the reasonable attitude for the modern man toward this ancient aspect of belief? Let us first get our bearings in the matter of rational method.

Broadly speaking, there are two current conceptions of method of approach to the doctrine of a future life: the traditional static method, and the modern development method. These correspond, respectively, to two world-views; the one, a conception of the world and truth as ready-made, absolute; the other, a conception of a growing world, a world that is coming to be by evolutionary processes.

The static or dogmatic method of interpretation of spiritual beliefs looks to some external finality or absolute which shall be the measure of truth and the end of all controversy.<sup>1</sup> This takes the form either of some absolute revelation that can be unequivocally trusted without verification; or some independent "proof" of immortality. The test-method in the first case is expressed in the query, "What saith the Scriptures," or in the assertion, "It is written," The "Revelation" is thus, tacitly at least, in the form of some unique finality beyond which we cannot go. The test-method in the second case is in the form of some rationalism that quotes some logical proof or orthodoxy as the deepest evidence for a future life, and thus rests in a logical certainty—often sanctioned by a pseudo-sanctity.

The rational criticism of both these methods of testing spiritual belief is in the fact that they contradict our best epistemological analysis of the actual processes of knowledge, and ignore the moral roots of spiritual knowledge as an achievement of the individual as well as a growth in society. A spiritual belief "unflecked by experience" would not have final and permanent authority for life. Belief in immortality, like belief in God, is shaped and conditioned by the vital demands of developing life. The relativity of these demands must be somehow taken into account. Moreover, both these modes of approach presuppose an absolute world rather than a relative world. Our method must make earnest with the relativity by which we are environed as well as

<sup>1</sup> By "external" here we mean an apprehension of truth external to one's own experience and creative moral insight; an item of truth taken on authority.

with the absolute which we are ever trying to grasp. The absolute "proofs" and the absolute "revelations" in terms of which other ages managed their problems are seen, under criticism, to involve the relativities of human experience. How shall we find our way to rational peace and confidence in the absence of absolute and oracular "proofs" and "revelation"?

In briefest outline we here commend the empirical or historical method of treating the problem, as over against the static effort which defers to some authoritative standard of truth. For as a matter of fact the doctrine of the future life, as a constant dogma to be repeated as an unvarying article of the creed of succeeding generations of believers, has lost its authority for men. If we are to commend it to men, we must find its form and its validity in the life which environs and controls us. Its truth and its reality must be apprehended by the forms of thought that lead thinking men to reality today. Modern thinking has abandoned the older static conception of a ready-made world and an absolute truth, as contrary to the facts of experience. Neither the world nor society nor truth can be dealt with as rigid finalities, without danger of false abstractions. They are in process—coming to be—rather than absolute achievements. They are in process of making, rather than completed products. In this emphasis upon process according to law, in the human realm, we have the distinctive thing in the "scientific method" or the evolutionary conception of the world, as it is variously called. Our interpretation of spiritual truth must inevitably reflect this general metamorphosis of thought-method. For such a conception of development, introduced into the realm of belief, reveals a complexity in the problem which defeats all absolute proofs and revelations. More exactly said, modern thinking requires that its revelations and proofs shall be given in terms of the processes of life itself and in the law of its unfolding. For both process and law are ineradicable convictions of the modern mind.

Human beliefs, however august and authoritative in their best estate, may be viewed as phenomena of human life. As such they have a natural origin and history. The genetic account and the natural history of a belief are likely to shed important

light upon the function and meaning of such developing belief in the history of society.

The empirical origin of belief in a future life is lost in the obscurity that surrounds all study of aboriginal beginnings. The "classic" theory is that the belief had its beginnings in dreams which led the savage dreamer to believe in another world than the waking world of common life. Instinctive fear and awakening affection must have figured in the projecting of another world in which the realities of this had their counterpart. The common characteristics of all these earliest beginnings of the belief is their superstitious, irrational form, reflecting the superstitious childishness and animalism of the races which have produced them. An absolute origin indeed we cannot find of the idea of another existence. But that the origin was humble and crude we cannot doubt.

As peoples developed, the idea of a future life reflected the developed conceptions of life. Primitive conceptions passed over into more rational and developed forms, always reflecting the type of thought of the race that brought them forth. Thus a comparative study of barbaric tribes of Africa with the savage of North America reveals some most interesting contrasts in their conceptions of the future world, reflecting always the contrasts in their folk-life. Among the pagan peoples and in ethnic religions the belief reflects always the current types of thought, expresses the prevailing philosophic interpretations—in short, the general consciousness of the people.

Now it is possible to study the problem thus genetically and arrive at the conclusion that a history of the development is all that can be attained by study.<sup>2</sup> In the midst of so much relativity we can only rehearse the processes. But this is to confuse process with meaning, form with function. Questions of origin may never be allowed to take the place of questions of meaning and worth. What is the function, the validity, the meaning for life of this

<sup>2</sup>A thoroughgoing treatment of the Christian doctrine of a future life would distinguish the following aspects of the total problem: (1) its empirical source; (2) its historic forms; (3) its rational worth; (4) its practical value. These must be largely merged in our brief discussions.

developing belief? A false naturalism or an ultra-pragmatism sometimes denies the right to go beyond the historic account. But the mind is equally insistent to know the meaning of the process—the worth and validity of that meaning for life. And that larger meaning we may get not so much from studying origins as in inspecting the whole history of the growth of the idea. This leads us to study the doctrine in its fruits rather than in its roots; in its best developments and not in its beginnings alone. We must measure life's meanings, not by their beginnings, but by their outcome, and by the progress from animal beginnings to spiritual achievements. Like the belief in God, and like the confession of faith, the substance of the belief grows. The race is unified in the belief in God—but the significance of the common avowal is a quantity that varies with the barrenness or the wealth of the soul-life. So with all "confessions of faith." And so with the article of the Catholic creed in which we avow belief "in the life everlasting."

When we employ the historic method in dealing with the doctrine we are facing at every stage of the inquiry a double analytic problem. We are concerned always with the given form of the doctrine, and likewise with the permanent truth which it struggles to set forth. We must know the history of a given form of faith that we may answer the question, "Why did the doctrine take this form?" or, "What influences shaped the doctrine?" And we must try to interpret sympathetically the life that lies behind all these forms of belief, and try to discover what motive and meaning were striving for expression in the forms. The function of a belief is quite as valid a problem as its form. Especially must we note the lines of development, and the insights afforded by the richest and best developed personalities. For the worth of the shaping conceptions that determine the form of a doctrine will be a true criterion of the validity of the doctrine. Thus the testimony of experience in its best estate, criticized and corrected by the whole background of human history, furnishes the source of authority of the evidence which is offered for acceptance. The Supreme Personality would thus inevitably become the Supreme Revealer of the truth to us. For the Christian this fact is met in Jesus as the supreme revelation of the truth.



As a provisional statement of the inner intention of the doctrine of a future life, as distinguished from its forms, we have pointed out that it always reflects the native or instinctive estimate of the complex fact of life itself. Life itself—our estimate of it—is always back of our affirmations of future life, of eschatological conceptions, of immortalities. This implicit reference to Life is at least vaguely manifest in the analysis of the crudest forms of the belief. It becomes explicit at a later stage in such conceptions as the value and meaning of life; life as the sharing of divine existence; or the reasoned conviction that personal existence is larger than it seems, etc. These and other estimates of life, one or all, enter into the intention or meaning of the doctrine which is shaped by the mental and moral outlook of the times. It is somehow a personal estimate of life itself—a positive affirmation, implicitly or explicitly made, of that estimate.

The relativity of the doctrine thus becomes apparent. The mental and spiritual outlook of a given age or civilization conditions its affirmation of life, and so its doctrine of future life. The philosophic type under which a man conceives his moral and rational world is a factor in the problem. The personal achievements of a man's inner world by which he enters into life and grasps it in terms of character and personal fellowships is a factor which cannot be measured in the achieving of the personal certainty of immortality.

The conception of a future life then is always an aspect of a haunting racial conviction that life is larger than the history which we are making here and now. It is a protest against certain apparent limitations of life—a faith that lays hold of an unseen reality. The problem appears and reappears as races of men arise and interrogate the limitations of life. There are many answers and many forms of belief. But the belief itself in an unseen and unknown world—a larger life—is essentially a catholic belief. It is a far cry from the ghost world of the savage which fills him with haunting fear and "nameless dread" to the calm faith of the Christian saint and philosopher. But "human nature" somehow unifies the savage and the saint in a common constitutional compulsion to affirm that the limitations of life are unknown, its boundaries are not fixed—that the visible has its setting in

an unknown world. This unexplained frontier is the subject-matter of the problem; our conception of it and the strength of our certainty concerning it are always conditioned by the life out of which we speak.

The preceding studies of the future life have been directed to historical aspects of the Christian doctrine, its beginnings in the New Testament, its antecedents in the Old Testament, and its developments in Christian history. We have been given a concise view of the main facts of the developing history covering the Christian era and the life from which it sprang. Such a view of the facts is of inestimable value for any critical study of the problem. On the other hand, the variety and relativity of the data that result from this study of details naturally awaken the question of the relation of all this to our own belief. Among such a multitude of witnessing voices, how shall thought find any authoritative direction? Whom shall we believe? What is the common content or message of the history? Here the method which seeks for directive principles, and which manages the developing process in terms of such principles and elicits its meanings by interpretation, must take precedence of the static conception of a final oracle. Even the Christian's Bible furnishes no such oracle or absolute finality.

The principle of method which we have treated in the large has of course its specific application in biblical interpretation. Modern historical method of Bible-study is shedding light upon the value and truth of our Christian Bible. But it is surely transforming our method of interpreting the truth and of securing its value for life. Traditional method has been controlled by a thought of the Bible as an oracle constituting an absolute revelation, or constituted of a mosaic of such revelations. These revelations of truth were treated as final revelations from God, somehow kept hermetically in a vacuum apart from life. The relative historical factors were largely overlooked. Thus the teaching of the Bible had an immediate and perpetually valid authority for life and conduct, apart from the human processes of literary expression and interpretation. Modern historical method completely eliminates the oracle method of learning the truth of the Bible.

It regards it as a record of life and interprets it in its meanings for life. It studies origins, influences of environment, developments of religious conceptions, etc. The method of interpretation and appropriation which goes with this form of historical approach must inevitably involve some radical readjustments. We no longer have to do with oracular finalities, but only with a relative history where beliefs are fluent and changing. The simplicity of a standard which will emerge from the past gives way to the search for a meaning that will satisfy and promote the present.

The Christian doctrine of a future life is simply one case in point. If we turn to the Old Testament, we find no clear or consistent teaching which we can accept and transfer bodily into our modern life.<sup>3</sup> Rather, we find ourselves studying certain conceptions, partly traceable to the influence of other nations, and partly shaped by the exigencies of the times. Even some of the passages which have commonly been supposed to reveal a full-fledged doctrine uttered with full confidence are seen, under the light of criticism, to yield no such meaning. When we turn to the New Testament a candid study again yields no complete or adequate doctrinal statement, valid for all time.<sup>4</sup> There is the same sense of development, of relativity, a growing note of confidence toward the future, but great ambiguity regarding an explicit form of doctrine. To be sure, certain spiritual ideals and ethical principles are emerging here into clearer light, and their consequences for future forms of belief are epochal. Spiritual "fulfilment" of meanings sheds a steady light in Jesus' teaching. But when we read the history of doctrine in the church in the succeeding centuries<sup>5</sup> we are still impressed that no final form of faith was made explicit by Jesus or Paul, and the church is characterized by "a faith beyond the forms of faith" rather than by any successful or final form of conception touching the future life. "I believe in the life everlasting" seems an unquenchable part of the Christian outlook upon life. But what does it mean? The great value of all these studies is in noting the shaping factors of

<sup>3</sup> See Professor Paton's discussion, *Biblical World*, Vol. XXXV.

<sup>4</sup> See Professor Scott's discussion, *Biblical World*, Vol. XXXVIII.

<sup>5</sup> See Professor Cross's discussion, *Biblical World*, Vol. XXXIX.

belief and in gaining therefrom principles valid for the shaping of our own belief.

Now when we thus seek guidance for our own thought from this variegated history, there is no escape *from rethinking the problem* and reinterpreting it for our own times. There is no oracle, but only the spirit of truth. There are no absolute standards, but only relative standards. The study of the history yields certain directive principles for thought; the study of the development reveals the nature of this truth which every age and every people must think in its own way and as conditioned by its own life. There is a certain content of belief which unifies all this changing of forms. Still the content is no rigid essence, but a developing meaning which in turn is shaped by the age or the man who grasps it.

This process of gaining valid and authoritative guidance for thought from a developing history is a crucial experience in the life of the religious student of today. The absolute standards of the older interpretation are but reluctantly abandoned. The relativity of the method just suggested becomes the starting-point of all sorts of skepticisms and agnosticisms. The capital problem for Christian apologetics today is this very problem of gaining confident religious convictions in a world of process. For our best revelations are in the form of fluent principles and not fixed item or oracles. In a relative world, how can I be sure of fundamental things? The method throws a man back upon the veracity of his own best powers and the veracity of the world with which he deals. But this very attitude of fundamental freedom and confidence is a condition of achieving the deepest spiritual truth: just as it seems to us the condition of understanding the problem under discussion. For this fluent history does not express a lawless relativity. Intelligence itself, in its tasks of thought, and the world of history and experience—these are law-expressing facts, and not lawless phenomena. Intelligence itself and its world—these are worthy of our faith, and they are our guide to confidence and truth. To believe in God is to believe in the veracity of his laws and in the truth of our best efforts under the sanction of our best ethical insight. In any case the modern man

has no lawless oracle to steady his faith in truth. God's meanings must be wrested by the faithful forms of our best experiences. The alternative is dogmatism.

Our search then for a valid form of belief in the future life involves some analysis of the factors which have shaped historic forms of the doctrine, as well as an analysis of the factors which must be taken into account in a formulation for the consciousness of today. Certain emphases of the past will disappear; certain new emphases will come into view. The best developments of self-consciousness, spiritual and rational, must be our court of appeal in the matter of the truth and certainty of our doctrine. Life and experience as we know it must be the field where the testing and verification must take place. But here the completest experience and the completest consciousness—the completest Life—must be our highest authority. In the absolute sense we may say that this conducts the Christian interpreter to the consciousness of Jesus. But on examination, this apparently simple test-principle loses its simplicity in view of the relativities of personal life. The “consciousness of Jesus” cannot be regarded as some unrelated absolute or perfection. The consciousness awakened and promoted within us under the stimulus of Jesus’ leadership is the concrete ultimate by which we measure spiritual belief. The Christian doctrine of a future life is that form of belief to which vital discipleship to Jesus conducts us. This is not an abstract religious “consciousness” achieved in some vacuum; but a consciousness articulated into the forms of today’s best life and thinking. Our problem is: What form does this optimistic estimate of life take for one sensitive to the best Christian civilization of the age; and on what grounds would he justify his faith?

## THE DEBT OF THE MODERN WORLD TO ISRAEL'S PRIESTS

PROFESSOR EDWARD CHAUNCEY BALDWIN  
University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.

The modern world is just awaking to a completer realization of its incalculable debt to Israel and to Israelitish thought, as embodied in the teachings of Israel's leaders—the prophets, the sages, and the priests.<sup>1</sup> As teachers, the prophets were the idealists; in politics, the radicals of the Hebrew race. Their message is adequately summarized in the statement of Micah regarding God's requirements: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"<sup>2</sup> The essence of true religion has never been better stated. Israel's later teachers could do no more than reiterate Micah's summary of God's requirements.<sup>3</sup> Righteousness, benevolence, and humility are still the world's ideal of true religion. The sages were the moral philosophers of Israel, and were chiefly interested in conduct. They, too, have bequeathed to us certain ideals which have not been superseded. They were interested in the question of how to live wisely here on the earth. Their answer to the question was not unlike that of the prophets, for they, also, emphasized the necessity of righteousness, and a humble walk with God. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter," they said, "fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."<sup>4</sup> The priests were the ritualists; and in politics, the conservatives of the Hebrew race. As such they were the upholders of the established order in church and

<sup>1</sup> See Jer. 18:18, where the three classes are referred to.

<sup>2</sup> Mic. 6:8.

<sup>3</sup> See the apostolic formula for true religion, Jas. 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

<sup>4</sup> Eccles. 12:13.

state. As the pillars of existing society, they constituted the most influential class in ancient Israel. Yet the very reason for their influence in that ancient life—their identification with the ceremonial law—has militated against a modern recognition of our obligation to them.

Our debt to the priests has been hitherto immensely underestimated. People have supposed that, since the priests were ritualists, and because ritualists are more prone to look backward than forward, they were interested chiefly in the traditions of the past, and that they did not concern themselves with the future progress of the race. It has been thought that they were mostly occupied with the forms of worship, and that they cared very little about applying moral principles to life—that, indeed, they cared not at all about moral principles except so far as they were embodied in the law. We have ignored the fact that, though the site of the Temple is now occupied by a mosque, and though the Law as a legal system is as obsolete as the laws of the Medes and Persians, the priests have bequeathed to us institutions that are still vital, ideals of conduct that are still inspiring, and conceptions of God and of man's duty toward him that have not been and that never can be superseded.<sup>5</sup>

The most important of the modern institutions that go back for their origin to Israel's priests is the church. There can be no question that the church as an organization is an offspring of Old Testament Judaism. Post-exilic Judaism, it will be remembered, was not a kingdom, but a church. The ruling power was not a monarchy, but a hierarchy. It was natural, therefore, that the early Christians, most of whom were Jews, should have thought of themselves as continuing the old organization, and that they should have tried, so far as possible, to retain the distinctive characteristics of the old ecclesiastical order.<sup>6</sup> That the early church considered itself as made up of the ideal representatives of the true Israel, the spiritual descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob, is shown by the

<sup>5</sup> A suggestive list of examples of these various forms of indebtedness is given in Harper, *Priestly Element in the Old Testament*, pp. 269-70. This list contains most of those I have mentioned.

<sup>6</sup> See Pressensé, *Early Years of Christianity*, pp. 46 ff.

fact that the apostles, who formed the nucleus of it, were twelve in number, corresponding to the twelve tribes of the Chosen People. That such was their thought is evidenced, also, by the fact that our modern church service of prayer, song, and exhortation comes directly from the Temple and synagogue service.<sup>7</sup> A visitor to a modern synagogue cannot fail to be impressed with the similarity, so far as form is concerned, of the service to that of a Christian church. The explanation of the similarity lies in the common origin of both. The early Christians adapted the synagogue service to their uses by introducing into it certain modifications, chief among which was, of course, the Eucharist. Such a service among the early Christians is described by Justin Martyr in his *Apology for the Christians*, addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and written about 150 A.D. This passage seems worthy of quotation both because it shows the close connection between the synagogue and the Christian church service, and because of its interest as the earliest extant account of a Christian religious exercise.

And on the day called Sunday, there is an assembly in one place of all who live in cities or in the country, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read so long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president gives the exhortation to the imitation of these good things. Then we all stand up together and offer prayer; and as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread is brought, and wine and water, and the president in like manner sends up prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability, and the congregation assents, saying the Amen. And the participation of the things over which thanks have been given is to each one, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the hands of the deacons. And they who are well to do and willing give each one as he wills, according to his discretion, and what is collected is deposited with the president, and he himself succors the orphans and the widows and those who are in want through sickness or other cause, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers who are sojourning; and in a word takes care of all who are in need.

It is not at all to be wondered at, considering the close affinity of this service to the regular synagogue exercises, that the apostle

<sup>7</sup> See Weizsäcker, *The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church*, II, 246, 254, 258. "It may with tolerable certainty be supposed that the Jewish Christians, particularly the congregation at Jerusalem, observed the whole ceremonial law with its weekly and yearly festivals, and did not renounce the cultus of the Old Testament theocracy till the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70."—Schaff, *History of the Apostolic Church*, p. 546. See also Fisher, *History of Christian Doctrine*, Part I, Period I, chap. i.



James applies<sup>8</sup> the name "synagogue" to the worshipping assemblies of the early Christians.

Another of our institutions that we owe to priestly influence is that of the Lord's day, or Sunday, which is the offspring of the Jewish Sabbath. The early church, as was natural in view of the fact that the most influential members of it were Jews, strictly observed the law regarding the observance of the Sabbath. Indeed, strict Sabbath observance continued in the Eastern church, perhaps because the proportion of Jews was greater in the East than in the West, till the fifth century. Even now the Christians of Abyssinia persist in the practice of Sabbath observance, together with certain other Jewish rites taught them by Jewish-Christian missionaries of the Alexandrian church. Just when the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was transferred to Sunday, we do not precisely know. Justin, the church father of the second century, in his *Apology for the Christians*, speaks of the transfer as an accomplished fact, and justifies it on two grounds—first, that on Sunday God created the world, and the light; and secondly, that on the first day of the week Christ rose from the dead. This explanation appealed to the religious feeling of Christendom to such a degree that it has ever since been universally regarded as the true reason for the change. We find it in modern Christian hymnology, as in the familiar hymn by Christopher Wordsworth, written in 1825, which contains these lines:

On thee at the Creation,  
The light first had its birth;  
On thee, for our salvation,  
Christ rose from depths of earth.

The first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, enjoining the sabbatical observance of Sunday was the edict of Constantine in 321 A.D. This famous edict prohibited all work on Sunday, except that of tilling the soil. After this, the tendencies toward Sabbatarianism (the identification of the Christian with the Jewish institution) developed rapidly. In 538 the third Council of Orleans recommended abstinence from agricultural labor on Sunday, "that the people might have more leisure to go to church and say their

<sup>8</sup> Jas. 2:2.

prayers." Such abstinence was expressly enjoined about the end of the ninth century by the Emperor Leo, "the Philosopher." By thoroughly establishing through legal enactment Sunday as a Sabbath, the confusion of the Christian with the Jewish institution would seem to have been completed. But it was reserved for the English Puritans to carry Sabbatarianism to its extreme limit by adding to the observance of Sunday an austerity by which neither it, nor the Sabbath-keeping of the Jews had ever hitherto been marked. The Directory of Public Worship and the Confession of Faith as formulated by the Westminster Assembly, and approved by Parliament in 1646, not only enjoined abstinence from labor, but strictly prohibited recreation as a transgression of the Fourth Commandment.

The most important of the religious festivals bequeathed to us by the priests is Easter. The origin of this festival in the Passover feast is somewhat obscured for English-speaking people<sup>9</sup> by the name, which is the Anglo-Saxon *Eastre*, and is a survival of the old Teutonic mythology. According to Bede the name is derived from Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of the spring, to whom the fourth month, called "Eostre moneth," was dedicated. A letter of Ceolfrid,<sup>10</sup> abbot of the monastery of Peter and Paul at Jarrow, to the king of the Picts, explains at considerable length the connection between the Passover and the Christian feast. He says:

There are three rules in the sacred writings, on account of which it is not lawful for any human authority to change the time of keeping Easter . . . ; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the gospel by means of the passion and resurrection of our Lord. . . . For that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb is the very same in which all the people of God were by Christ's resurrection delivered from eternal death. Then, on the morning of the Lord's day, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord, with much joy of pious revelation, made known the glory of his resurrection.

<sup>9</sup> The origin of the festival is much more apparent for other than English-speaking peoples, for the Greek word *πασχα* has passed directly into most modern languages. The French word is *Pâques*; the Scotch, *Pasch*; the Dutch, *Paschen*; the Danish, *Paaske*.

<sup>10</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book V, chap. 21.

In identifying the Easter festival as the Christian successor of the Passover, Ceolfrid merely stated what was true according to the common consent of Christendom all through the Christian centuries preceding. In the early centuries of the Christian era, all those in both the eastern and the western churches who believed the Christian Passover to be a commemoration of Christ's death maintained the custom of holding the Easter festival on the day prescribed for the Jewish Passover, the fourteenth day of the first month, that is, the lunar month of which the fourteenth day either falls on, or next follows, the vernal equinox. Not until the Council of Nice in 325 was the date of the festival finally settled for the whole church in opposition to the opinion of those who persisted that the date of the Jewish fixed that of the Christian festival.

Closely connected with the origin of Easter in the Passover feast is that of the Eucharist. It was while eating the Passover that Jesus instituted the rite which, among his followers, was to supersede the older feast.<sup>11</sup> In speaking of "my blood of the covenant which is shed for many," Jesus seems to have desired to connect this new rite with the old sacrificial feast in which the worshipers, by partaking of the sacrificial meal, partook also of the blessing which the sacrifice was to secure. The Lord's Supper is, therefore, a continuation of the Jewish Paschal feast.

In the apostolic period it was celebrated daily, at least in circumstances where daily worship was possible. Certainly such was the custom in the church at Jerusalem where the celebration of the Lord's Supper was the closing act of the daily social feast. As celebrated by the early Christians, the Lord's Supper, or "the breaking of bread," as they more frequently designated the rite, seems to have been a very simple and natural observance. In the Jerusalem church it was connected with the community of goods, the believers considering themselves as one household of faith, and was simply a part of the communal evening meal. It was not

<sup>11</sup> The Passover feast is now almost entirely obsolete. Since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, when the Jews were gathered there to keep this feast, it has not been observed by the Hebrews, though the feast of unleavened bread which was a part of the Passover is still kept. It is said, however, that the colony of Samaritans still eat the Passover on Mount Gerizim.

preceded by any special religious exercises.<sup>12</sup> We are told that "day by day [καθ' ἡμέραν] continuing steadfastly with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart. . . ."<sup>13</sup>

Another of the church's sacraments derived directly from the priests is baptism, the solemn ceremony of reception and incorporation into the communion of the visible church. In spite of some assertions to the contrary,<sup>14</sup> most scholars see in Christian baptism an adaptation of the baptism which, with circumcision and sacrifice, accompanied the reception of gentiles into the family of Israel.<sup>15</sup>

When the "stranger" wished to become a "child of the covenant," he had to fulfil three conditions: he must be circumcised; he must be baptized; he must offer a sacrifice. Of these three rites, baptism seems to have been regarded as most important.<sup>16</sup> According to the established custom in the baptism of proselytes, three of those who had instructed him in the law acted as his sponsors, and were called "the fathers of the baptism." Together they conducted him to a pool. While he stood naked, and up to his neck in the water, the great commandments of the law were read to him. To these he promised obedience; and a blessing was pronounced upon him. Then he plunged beneath the surface, being careful to be entirely submerged. Upon his coming out of the water, he was regarded as a new man in reference to his past, that, with its defilements, being looked upon as buried in the waters of baptism.

The link between baptism as a priestly ceremony and baptism as a Christian sacrament is furnished by John the Baptist. In his use of baptism, he was influenced in part by the customs of

<sup>12</sup> The Protestant "preparatory lecture" finds its only authorization in I Cor. 11:28.

<sup>13</sup> Acts 2:46.

<sup>14</sup> "Regarded from the apostolic point of view, baptism cannot be connected . . . with the baptism administered to proselytes to Judaism."—Pressensé, *Early Years of Christianity*, p. 375.

<sup>15</sup> The first scholar to recognize this was Augusti in his *Manual of Christian Archaeology*, II, 326. This was published in 1836. He traced a complete parallel between Christian baptism and that of Jewish proselytes.

<sup>16</sup> In the case of female proselytes the requirements were baptism and the sacrifice; and after the destruction of the Temple, the latter was wholly dispensed with.

ceremonial washings enjoined by the law, and in part by the custom of baptizing proselytes. The main aspect of baptism as he employed it was as a preparation for the kingdom of God. It was a baptism of repentance, and was intended as a symbol of the desire on the part of those who received it to seek purification, like aliens who had lived in defilement, in order that they might obtain admission among the people who awaited the immediate realization of the ancient hope of Israel—the only hope that remained since the scepter had departed from Judah, the hope of “the kingdom.”<sup>17</sup> From the baptism of repentance, which enrolled the pious Israelite in the number of those who expected the realization of Israel’s long-deferred hope, to the Christian baptism, as we find it on the Day of Pentecost, is but a step. The latter was the solemn ceremony of reception into the communion of those who believed that in Jesus of Nazareth the hope of Israel had been fulfilled.

It is not institutionally, however, that we are most indebted to the priests. We owe to them certain conceptions of God and of what he requires of men which are as potent today as they were twenty-five hundred years ago. Chief among these conceptions is that of the holiness of God, an idea which is in its beginnings attributable to the prophets, but which was developed and emphasized by the priests. In their thought, holiness was the supreme attribute of God. The root idea in the word seems to be that of distance or separation; and hence it suggests in the priestly use of it as an attribute of deity the contrast between the divine and the human. It is undoubtedly true that in the early use of the word “holy” it did not, when applied either to God or to men, express a moral attribute; but rather as applied to God, the idea of majesty, and as applied to men or things, the idea of belonging to God, or of being dedicated to him. Yet it is equally evident that the idea of holiness was progressively spiritualized till it came to be thought of more and more as a moral quality. Consequently, the phrase “the Holy One,” which originally had meant merely the lofty, the majestic one, who dwelt on high and was separated in space from men, gradually came to mean the morally lofty one, separated in

<sup>17</sup> For a slightly different interpretation of the significance of the baptism of John, see Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus*, I, 274.

character from impure and sinful men.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, the word "holy" as applied to men changed its meaning to correspond to an enlarged and clarified conception of the character of God. Though it originally meant only belonging to God, or dedicated to him, thus expressing, not a quality, but a relation, it gradually changed its meaning, as the loftier idea of Jehovah's character reacted on it, till it came to mean morally pure, ethically clean.

This holiness in the sense of separation from sin is, in the priestly thought, not only an attribute of God, it is also his one and constant demand of his people. They, too, are to be "holy." This means that they are to be in a proper physical condition to come into his holy place, and so like him in character as to be able to come into his spiritual presence. Ceremonial cleanness and purity of heart are, then, what God demands of men. Again and again in the Torah is this demand for a holiness in man to correspond to that of God reiterated.<sup>19</sup> The injunction, "Sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy, for I am holy," meant separate yourselves from impurity—that which contaminates and degrades. This includes, of course, abstinence from that which would cause ceremonial uncleanness, but it includes, also, such moral purity as would fit a man to enter God's holy place.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?  
 And who shall stand in his holy place?  
 He that hath clean hands and a pure heart;  
 Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood,  
 And hath not sworn deceitfully.  
 He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah,  
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.<sup>20</sup>

Such separation from physical and moral impurity was to be secured by the keeping of the law.<sup>21</sup> Nor was this reverent regard for the law as a means of acquiring holiness wholly unreasonable, considering to what extent the holiness codes dealt with the subject of moral purity. Such injunctions as "Thou shalt not hate thy

<sup>18</sup> See Davidson, *Theology of the Old Testament*, pp. 252 ff.

<sup>19</sup> Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:26; cf., also, 20:7; 21:6-8.

<sup>20</sup> Ps. 24:3-5. See, also, Ps. 15:1-5.

<sup>21</sup> In Num. 15:40 the keeping of the law is recommended as a means of acquiring holiness.

brother in thine heart"<sup>22</sup> and "Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"<sup>23</sup> clearly show that the law was not what it has sometimes been supposed, a mass of arbitrary formalism, but that it set up a standard of kindness and of stainless probity such as no other legislator ever thought of doing.

Strange indeed have been the misstatements which have been made regarding the Hebrew law by writers who have been misled by a failure to recognize that the law was more than "a mass of prescriptions . . . an attempt to define all the beliefs and acts of life,"<sup>24</sup> that as a matter of fact it did attempt to "supply the motive of conduct,"<sup>25</sup> and that the motive it supplied in the command "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was lofty enough to satisfy one who announced that he came, not to destroy but to "complete" the law.<sup>26</sup>

In basing its enactments upon a fundamental conception such as this, Hebrew law was absolutely unique among ancient legal systems. The basic idea of Roman law, as expressed in its earliest code—that of the Twelve Tables—was the equality of rights of Roman citizens, "omnibus, summis infimisque, iura aequare." The fundamental conception of Hebrew law was not one of rights, but of duty. Members of the commonwealth of Israel were not, in the eyes of the law, citizens with rights to be conserved, but members of a family with mutual obligations to fulfil; and the obligation that included all the others was that of mutual forbearance and love. Moreover, Hebrew law differed from all other legal systems in that obedience to it was optional, that it depended

<sup>22</sup> Lev. 19:17.

<sup>23</sup> Lev. 19:18.

<sup>24</sup> Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 239. In the same volume, p. 227, we find this assertion: "Of inward sins, transgressions of the law of purity and love, which belong to the heart, nothing is said; this was a domain which the national legislation did not undertake to enter."

<sup>25</sup> "The law does not in itself supply the motive of conduct—tends, indeed, by emphasizing the outward standard, to attract the will from that inward love and devotion which is the mainspring of the moral-religious life."—Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 240.

<sup>26</sup> The word translated fulfil (πληροῦν), Matt. 5:17, really means to complete, or fill out.

for its sanction upon the appeal that it made to the conscience of the citizen. In contrast to the elaborate system of police and courts and penalties that we are accustomed to see employed for the enforcement of the law in modern Christendom, there was in ancient Israel almost no legal machinery. The lack of it was due to the Hebrew belief that the law was not something outside man, an injunction laid upon him from without; but that it was an objective presentation of man's own reason and sense of justice. "The word is very nigh unto thee," affirmed the Hebrew lawgiver, "in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."<sup>27</sup> That obedience to the law was not obligatory, but a matter of moral choice is again and again emphasized. In the passage just referred to Moses is made to say: "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse: wherefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed."<sup>28</sup>

Because Hebrew law was a law of kindness, because it was based upon a recognition, not of the rights of men, but of their duties, and because it depended for its sanction upon the appeal that it made to the conscience of the citizen, it still exerts an influence upon the religious institutions and, in general, upon the religious thought of our modern life.

<sup>27</sup> Deut. 30:14.

<sup>28</sup> Deut. 30:19. See also Kent, *Origin and Permanent Value of the Old Testament*, pp. 140-41.



## Work and Workers

---

### WILLIS JUDSON BEECHER

The ranks of our veterans in Old Testament scholarship are once more reduced by the death on May 10, at his home in Auburn, N.Y., of Dr. Willis Judson Beecher. He has been best known to this and the preceding generation as professor of the Hebrew language and literature in Auburn Theological Seminary, where he lived his life and did his work. The remarkable and loving tributes which the citizens of Auburn, the members of the Theological Seminary, the various civic, literary, and mercantile associations of that and adjoining cities paid to his memory at the funeral revealed a character of rare exemplary worth, whose endowments and ideals and methods deserve more than passing notice.

Willis Judson Beecher was born in Hampden, Ohio, April 29, 1838, of sturdy Christian parents. They early moved to New York state, where the lad was trained in Augusta and Vernon academies. He was graduated from Hamilton College at the age of twenty (1858) with the degree of A.B. After teaching three years in Whiteside Seminary, he entered Auburn Theological Seminary in 1861 and was graduated and also ordained to the ministry of the Presbyterian church, in 1864. For the next year he was pastor at Ovid, N.Y.; and from 1865-69 was professor of moral science and belles lettres at Knox College, Galesburg, Ill. In 1869-71 he was pastor of the First Church of Christ at Galesburg. In 1871 he was called to Auburn Theological Seminary, to the chair which he so acceptably filled for thirty-seven years, until his voluntary retirement in 1908, when seventy years of age. Since retirement from the Seminary he has devoted his time to writing and to the service of the several boards and organizations of which he was a member. Physically robust until about a month before his death, he was then stricken with the sudden illness which has removed a rare man and a widely beloved friend.

Dr. Beecher was a man among men. He was one of those persons who never lost his humanness. He was interested in everything that made for the uplift of the life about him. More than this, he willingly, gladly shared his burden of responsibility as a citizen in the city of Auburn. Even his habits as a scholar did not make him a recluse, nor

dehumanize him. Among the educated and uneducated he was equally a man abounding in human sympathy and helpfulness. Modest, retiring, yet firm, he commanded the highest regard of everyone.

As a member of the Presbyterian church he was a pillar of support. He was always an official in the local church at Auburn, a teacher in the Bible school, a genial friend and helper, and one of the most cordial welcomers of those whom others would be likely to overlook. In denominational work in the synod and in the whole country he was naturally a leader, wise adviser, and counselor. Pastors and teachers eagerly consulted him and availed themselves of his sympathy and wisdom in the prosecution of their work. In the community at large he wielded a forceful influence for good. The Y.M.C.A., the city library, the historical society, Wells College at Aurora—all were enriched by his active efforts and counsel.

But the one department to which he gave the bulk of his time and strength since 1871, a period of forty-one years, was that of the Old Testament.

He was known among his students as patient and kind toward the hard-working, earnest, yet mediocre student, and always severe on himself. He had the spirit of the true scholar in the thoroughness which he required; and the humility of the real scholar in his treatment of difficult questions. His students testify that they received some of their best lessons in sincerity in the modest reply he gave to some difficult question: "I do not know; I'll investigate the matter and see if I can give a satisfactory answer." He rarely if ever gave an answer to weighty questions based on his own assumption of knowledge, or the superiority of his methods of investigation. With this modesty was linked an open-mindedness that always seeks the truth and welcomes it from any quarter. He was not merely a student of books, but a thinker, who made his own investigations and reached his own conclusions. Though hospitable to truth from any source, he was by nature conservative, and very tenacious of the conclusions he had once reached. While he recognized the scientific method, he could not always accept the conclusions of his fellow-workers. The old paths were more acceptable to him than the untrodden ways of new theories.

As an Old Testament scholar he devoted much time to lecturing, and wrote extensively for religious journals, especially those denominational, and the *Sunday School Times*. His published books have been mainly of a popular character. In 1874 he issued *Father Tompkins and His Bibles*; in 1905, *The Prophets and the Promise*; in 1906, *The Teaching of*

*Jesus Concerning the Future Life*; in 1907, *The Dated Events of the Old Testament*; and in 1911, *Reasonable Biblical Criticism*. Though somewhat mediating in character, his last works cling firmly to the principles of the conservative school of thought on Old Testament themes.

Dr. Beecher had another very desirable trait for these times. He had a greater regard for life than for intellectual conclusions. As over against the spiritual life of men, he felt that the biblical scholar often pursued the base of a rainbow. This attitude necessarily made him a mediator, a judge. His chief question was not, "What is truth?" but "What is the truth for men?"

As a kind friend, by the written and printed testimony of the professors of Auburn Seminary, to which credit must be given for our information, Dr. Beecher was unsurpassed. His unselfishness and fidelity toward others had the ring of true friendship. He had a heart that was always thoughtful, warm, and tender. He put himself in the place of others. He was free from envy and any semblance of self-seeking, preferring others before himself. He was the first to rejoice in the successes of his friends and the most sympathetic in their sorrows. Since the death of his wife twenty years ago, his only child, Miss Elizabeth Beecher, has been his constant companion and the sharer of all his joys and sorrows.

Life to Dr. Beecher was something sacred. He made drudgery divine. He moved among even the common things of life with the sense of their divineness. With all his passing years he was always young and fresh in thought. His life broadened and enriched with the years. His love of nature, of the woods, brooks, and mountains, the joys of friendship, the loss of himself for the good of others—all made his years youthfully happy. To those who knew him best, he was a great man and a great Christian.

IRA M. PRICE

## Book Reviews

### THE RELIGIONS OF SYRIA

There has long been need for an authoritative book on the religious sects of modern Syria and Palestine. Such a work has now appeared in the Bross Lectures for 1908 which have just been published in an expanded form.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bliss, the author, possesses peculiar qualifications for his task, inasmuch as he was born in Syria, speaks Arabic fluently, and has had long experience through residence in the country. His book is a careful and elaborate collation of materials derived both from personal observation and from study of the best native and European literary authorities.

The opening chapter is devoted to a sketch of the historical development of the innumerable sects, Jewish, Christian, and Muhammadan, that flourish in adjacent villages and in adjacent quarters of the cities of the land; and some remarks are made upon the survivals of primitive heathen superstitions that are common to all the sects, and upon certain rites that are borrowed from one sect by another. The Muhammadans, for instance, sometimes receive Christian baptism because they believe that it destroys a certain odor, peculiar to themselves, which attracts ghosts. They also have their children carried in Christian religious processions in order to protect them from disease. It is a pity that more space could not have been devoted to this extremely interesting part of the discussion, in regard to which Dr. Bliss is competent to speak as an authority.

In the second chapter the author discusses the constitution of the eastern churches, namely, the Greek Orthodox, the Jacobite, or Old Syrian, and the Uniates, or sections of the old churches, that have made submission to the papacy, among which the Maronites are the most conspicuous, as the only one of the eastern churches that has gone over entirely to Rome. In connection with the Greek Orthodox church there is a particularly interesting discussion of the recent national movement which aims to throw off the tyranny of the foreign, Greek-speaking ecclesiastics, and to secure a native Arabic-speaking hierarchy.

The third chapter contains an account of the liturgies of the eastern

<sup>1</sup> *The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine.* By Frederick Jones Bliss, Ph.D., New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. xiv+354. \$1.50.

churches. Here the author has worked carefully from the sources, and has given us a valuable contribution to the history of liturgics.

Chapters four to six describe the various aspects of Islam. Here the most interesting sections are perhaps those on the Muhammadan hagiology and the dervishes.

The closing chapter describes the results of foreign missionary work both educational and religious. Here we have an impartial estimate of the work that has been accomplished during the last fifty years. Little has been done in the way of making direct converts to Protestantism, and the Muhammadan community remain still untouched, but vast results have been achieved through education, in the way of lifting the religious and moral life of the old churches, and in awakening the desire for political freedom.

This book is so enlivened with anecdote and illustration that in addition to its scientific value it is delightful reading.

LEWIS BAYLES PATON

HARTFORD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

---

#### THE ODES OF SOLOMON

The publication in 1909 of the Odes of Solomon by the discoverer of the Syriac manuscript which contained them was followed by a flood of literature dealing with the various problems to which the Odes had given rise. All varieties and shades of opinion were set forth in bewildering confusion. With the promise of a second edition<sup>1</sup> it was impossible to restrain a certain curiosity as to the effect which the critical work of scholars for two years would have on the views advanced by Dr. Harris in his first edition. This alone would have secured the volume under review a welcome. The author has not disappointed us but has addressed himself seriously to his task. In a "Brief Summary of Recent Criticisms" he gives careful consideration to what he deems the most important matters that had emerged in the discussion. The claims of Harnack, Menzies, Bernard, Headlam, Dietrich, Wellhausen, and Reinach are examined and criticized. This work is marked by the fairness and acuteness which one has come to expect from Dr. Harris. He is quick to recognize suggestive lines of thought and is ready to show them due respect. But he is of the opinion that some time must elapse before "the final grains of truth are gathered from the miscellaneous

<sup>1</sup> *The Odes and Psalms of Solomon*. Published from the Syriac Version by J. Rendel Harris. Cambridge, 1911. 2d edition. Pp. 272. 12s. net.

heap of opinions." In this he will find many who will agree with him. Meanwhile, he apparently sees no good reason for withdrawing from his position but will watch with interest the process of elucidation. A bibliography to the time of publication is given and is of value, but the literature on the subject is increasing with the months. The addition of a facsimile of the manuscript was a happy thought. This faces the title-page and contains Odes XXVI:13-14; XXVII, XXVIII:1-4.

There is so little agreement regarding the problems of the Odes that one is wise to reserve judgment on the various theories that are being propounded. There is reason to hope that the patient, continuous work which scholars are bestowing on the whole question will before long give us surer ground on which to stand. The criticisms of Dr. Harris in his second edition render service in pointing out the weaknesses of some of the important attempts at solution. The chief interest of the book is that it gives us the reaction of the pioneer on the hypotheses which followed. One wonders that with the importance which the author attaches to the reference to the Sanctuary in Ode IV, he has given so little consideration to the time of Hadrian as a possible historical background for the reference. There is a Jewish legend that the rebellion in the time of Hadrian was due to permission being given to rebuild the temple on a site slightly removed from the former one. Even the legend may be worthy of consideration when we are welcoming gleams of light from any quarter.

The second part of his review concerns itself with a contribution of French scholarship.<sup>2</sup> The work appeared originally in the *Revue biblique*, October, 1910, January and April, 1911. The translation of the Odes is by M. Labouet and is preceded by a short preface and a small bibliography. The greater part of the book is by Mgr. Batiffol, who is responsible for the historical and critical part of the work. This is rather comprehensive in scope and begins with a survey of the work which had already been done on the Odes at the time of writing. A number of sections follow containing the author's discussion of various phases of the question: "Le personnage de Solomon," "L'unité d'auteur des Odes," "La Christologie," "Du docétisme de cette Christologie," "La sotériologie des Odes," "Observations complémentaires et conclusions." The conclusions reached are: The Odes were originally written in Greek, from

<sup>2</sup> *Les Odes de Solomon, une œuvre chrétienne des environs de l'an 100-120*. Traduction française et introduction historique by J. Labouet et P. Batiffol. Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1911. Pp. 123.

which they were translated into Syriac; apart from interpolations they are the work of one author; the "Solomon" of the title is but a literary device; the Odes are quite strongly docetic in character but the docetism is not that of the great heresiarchs Valentinus, Basilides, or Marcion, but rather a phase such as that which Ignatius combats; the writer of the Odes represents a mysticism which is on the margin between Catholic orthodoxy and heresy. Its *provenance* is Syria or Asia and its date 100-120 A.D.

The work of Mgr. Batiffol is carefully done, at times almost tediously so, and the ground is well covered. Dr. Harris indicates in his second edition his sense of the importance of this work, at that time unfinished. The parts of greatest interest are the discussions on the docetic and mystic elements of the Odes. In these we find the best contribution of the author. The use of the name "Solomon" scarcely merits the attention given to it. Occasionally one feels a sense of limitation imposed by the author's presuppositions, but on the whole the discussion is strong and quite suggestive and will be of assistance in a solution of the whole problem.

ERNEST W. PARSONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## New Literature

The most important books listed in these columns will receive notice in the book-review pages.

### OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary. Published in Commemoration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Founding of the Seminary. New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. 634. \$3.00.

A group of fifteen essays representative of the well-known scholarly and conservative ideals of Princeton. Eight of them discuss biblical topics, four theological, one homiletical, and three historical.

### ARTICLES

Eerdmans, B. D. The Ark of the Covenant. *The Expositor*, May, 1912, pp. 408-20.

A defense of the historicity of the account of the origin of the ark as given in Exod., chap. 32. Of especial interest is the theory that the two tables of stone were pieces of rock from Mt. Sinai intended to serve the same purpose in general as the "two mules' burden of earth" desired by Naaman.

Wiener, H. M. The Position of the Tent of Meeting. *Ibid.*, May, 1912, pp. 476-80.

An attempt to explain the conflict of testimony between E and the other documents regarding the position of the tent of meeting. The solution proposed involves a transposition of Exod. 33:7-11 to follow Exod. 13:22, and proposes to interpret the records so as to show that *prior* to the legislation at Sinai Moses used to seek Jehovah in a tent outside of the camp, but afterward the tent and the ark were located within the camp.

### NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

HOSKIER, H. C. Concerning the Genesis of the Versions of the New Testament. Remarks Suggested by the Study of *P* and the Allied Questions as Regards the Gospels. 2 vols., pp. xvi+469 and viii+423. London: B. Quaritch, 1910, 1911. 12s. net.

Mr. Hoskier conceives the wide textual variations shown in ancient biblical manuscripts to have resulted from the habit, with which he somewhat arbitrarily credits the scribes, of copying from polyglots, trilingual (Greek-Latin-Syriac) or quadrilingual (Greek-Latin-Syriac-Coptic). Indeed by the close of the first century, Mr. Hoskier thinks, "they were using Greek and Syriac together." The extensive collations of readings which he prints in support of this singular view, readily suggest simpler explanations (mixture, harmonistic corruption, paraphrase, casual variation, etc.). Mr. Hoskier shows no little impatience with Dr. Hort's textual labors, and indeed seems out of sympathy with the historical method in general.

HOSKIER, H. C. Concerning the Date of the Bohairic Version: Covering a Detailed Examination of the Text of the Apocalypse and a Review of Some of the Writings of the Egyptian Monks. London: B. Quaritch, 1911. Pp. viii+203. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Hoskier seeks, with no very great success, to combat the view recently advanced by Guidi, Leipoldt, and others, that the Bohairic versions belong to the seventh century rather than the third. He appeals to the Coptic cast of many of the New Testament quotations in fourth-century Egyptian writers as evidence of their use of the Bohairic, and repeats his conviction that the Codex Sinaiticus shows Old Latin, Old Syriac, and Bohairic influence. The serious historical improbability of this theory of polyglot exemplars will require stronger evidence than Mr. Hoskier adduces, to overcome it.







THE APOTHEOSIS OF ANTONINUS AND FAUSTINA

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XL

AUGUST, 1912

NUMBER 2

## Editorial

### HEREDITARY RELIGION

In all the higher interests and experiences of human life, the original elements which the individual contributes out of his own personal experience are so inextricably involved and interwoven with the inherited elements which he receives from his antecedents and environment that it is practically impossible completely to distinguish the two. But any fair account or analysis of any of the great spiritual interests of humanity must recognize, and so far as possible do justice to, both aspects of the matter—the personal achievements of the individual, and the heritage into which he enters as the heir of the generations gone before. The artist, for instance, may be a genius of unusual personal gifts; but the chances are that even his aesthetic sense and capacity came to him by inheritance from an artistic ancestry; and in any case his own gifts cannot come to their full development apart from the stimulating influence and indispensable equipment which artistic tradition furnishes to the individual artist. In the realm of music the case is the same: the individual musician, however great his personal genius, is indebted to his ancestry for his gifts, and to the accumulated musical culture and labor of centuries for the capital which he seeks to enlarge. In all departments of human activity the modern recognition of heredity and of social interdependence has given new point to the old question of the Apostle, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"

This truth of indebtedness to one's inheritance, thus valid in all other departments of human life, holds with special force in the

realm of religion. True it is that religion is essentially and fundamentally a personal matter—the most personal of all matters—which must be possessed by the individual in his own experience if it is to be real and vital. This great Christian truth, permanently recovered by the Protestant Reformation, has rightly been in the forefront of Christian thought and preaching ever since. It has led to the emphasis on conversion as individual regeneration and individual commitment to the following of Christ, that has been so prominent ever since in all branches of the Christian church. It has magnified the thought of individual responsibility before God and of personal salvation as the goal of religion, that have been such characteristic marks of Protestantism since the Reformation. The individuality of real religion remains a fundamental Christian truth which nothing in this editorial is intended, and nothing in modern thinking must be allowed, to overlook or obscure.

But in religion, as in all the other higher and spiritual realms of our mysterious and many-sided human life, it is also true that the debt of the individual to his ancestry and inheritance is incalculably great. And this side of the truth is one that in much of the modern Protestantism has been too largely overlooked. Certain of our great Christian communions, to be sure, especially those which have strongly emphasized the place and dignity of the historic church, have rendered a great service to Christian thought by their steady insistence on this truth. And every individual Christian who has thoughtfully and fairly taken an inventory of his own spiritual possessions has recognized how largely these have been mediated to him by a godly ancestry and by the great Christian inheritance into which he has entered as the spiritual heir of “Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs.”

But the fact remains that in spite of these individual and ecclesiastical recognitions of the truth for which we are contending, it has all too often in these modern days, and especially in our strongly individualistic America, been neglected or forgotten. Texts like those in the Forty-eighth or Eighty-seventh psalms which magnify spiritual inheritance in Zion, the pointed question already quoted from I Corinthians, chap. 4, or the significant phrase with which Paul opens his Second Epistle to Timothy—“I

thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience"—have been too rarely preached from. The great obligation of spiritual trusteeship, which rests upon parents for their children and upon older Christians in the church for the younger, has been too little emphasized. The wealth and glory of the church's inheritance of Christian truth and experience and loyalty and sacrifice from all the generations and centuries past, has been too little impressed upon its ignorant or indifferent modern heirs. And often as we sing the great hymn of Bishop How, we sing it none too often—

For all the saints who from their labors rest,  
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

Alleluia.

For we live in an age when the recognition of the large hereditary element in religion is vitally and increasingly important. The weakening in what we might call *family* religion that has gone along with the decay or neglect of the family altar is not the least serious aspect of that general weakening of the home that is so marked a characteristic of modern American life, particularly in the cities. The lessened loyalty to the church that, in spite of all that the modern Young Peoples' and Sunday-school movements have done to counteract it, still distinguishes the younger generation of today from those that preceded them, points to this same need. And the general lack of any sense of hereditary obligation and responsibility in religious matters, that is so characteristic of younger Americans, is further evidence of the same sort. An Oxford professor, commenting once with surprise on the remark of a young American woman that her mother was an Episcopalian and her father a Congregationalist, but that she herself was thinking of becoming a Catholic, expressed well just this sense of hereditary responsibility when he said: "Why, with my ancestry and spiritual inheritance, I should feel that I must be a Scotch Presbyterian whether or no."

How then can this sense of hereditary responsibility, this recognition of the large inherited element in religion, be developed among us? More especially, how can we conserve and pass on to

the next generation, at least intact, if possible enlarged and enriched, the spiritual heritage that has come down to us? First and foremost, the responsibilities of spiritual trusteeship on the part of parents and older friends of children must be laid more heavily upon them. Where in earlier days parents took their children to church, read and repeated Bible stories and sang hymns with them, and taught them to pray, the modern American parent too often sends his children to Sunday school while he stays at home to read the Sunday paper. With what a wealth of rich inheritance and tradition and influence the Bible and Christian history and the church can permanently endow a child's life, when these are mediated to the child through Christian parents and a Christian home in his early years! Many a mature Christian realizes increasingly as he thinks back over his own life how many of its best fruits have grown directly from the seeds which Christian parents planted in his receptive soul during the impressionable years of childhood. And what he has received he ought also to transmit for it cannot be emphasized too strongly that parents hold these treasures in trust for their children; and that where for any reason the parents fail to be faithful to their trusteeship, the children never enter into their rich inheritance. Merely to give a child a book of Bible stories to read, or merely to send a child to Sunday school that he may there learn Christian truth and duty from the lips of another, is not to discharge this sacred obligation of spiritual trusteeship. If these seeds are to grow to their best fruitage, they must be sown in the child's life at just the right time, and watched and watered with tender care by the same hand that sowed them; and that is a parent's privilege—a parent's duty.

Again, we must build up the family altar that is broken down, and must kindle upon it again the devotion of vital *family* religion. Under the new conditions and in the forced pace of modern life, particularly in the cities, it will doubtless be necessary to modify in some measure the traditional worship of the family altar as many of us were brought up on it. Very likely the family may not be able to gather around it so often, nor at the same times and places, as in the simpler and less crowded days of our fathers. But some time, somewhere, the modern home must keep alive the flame of

family piety upon its household altar: and this, not only for the sake of the generation that now is, but even more for the sake of the generation that is to be.

And finally, the church must recognize its large share of responsibility as the institutional mediator to its children of their spiritual inheritance, and must discharge this trusteeship by a more intelligent and earnest work among them. Indispensably valuable as is the work of the Sunday school, the entire responsibility for the religious nurture of children in the church cannot be left to the Sunday school without running the risk of making the latter in the child's mind a sufficient substitute for the church. At present this happens all too often, with the result that when boys and girls reach the age where they think they are old enough to cease going to Sunday school, they drop out of contact with all organized religious life and work, because they have never formed the habit of church-going, and have never learned to love the church as their own. The importance of acquiring this habit and this attitude toward the church *in childhood* can hardly be overestimated; and by whatever methods may be best adapted to its local conditions, the church must work with parents toward such acquisition. Only by such co-operative effort can the coming generation be prepared for and endowed with its great spiritual heritage.

## THE WORSHIP OF THE ROMAN EMPERORS

PROFESSOR HENRY FAIRFIELD BURTON, LL.D.  
University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y.

The impulse that led to the deification of the Roman emperors<sup>1</sup> came from the East. The Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, Lycurgus and Lysander of Sparta, and Alexander the Great were worshiped as divinities both while living and when dead. When Rome conquered the East, the same divine honors were transferred to the Roman proconsuls. Naturally, then, when a single ruler of the empire appeared, he was acclaimed as a god in the eastern provinces. Meanwhile the way had been prepared for the imperial worship in the minds of the Romans themselves. The heroes of Roman legend, as Aeneas, Latinus, Romulus, whom the Romans accepted as historical personages and as the founders of the nation, were believed to be of divine descent and were themselves honored as deities. It was natural, therefore, that the founder of the empire, a new and greater Rome, should likewise be regarded as a god and be accorded the same homage. Another precursor of the imperial cult was the worship of the Dea Roma. This divinity, the personification of the growing power of Rome in the East, was a Greek invention. Temples were first erected to her in the second century B.C. in Asia Minor, her cult became associated with that of the emperor both in the East and in the West during the reign of Augustus and finally received full recognition at the capital through the building of Hadrian's great temple of Venus and Roma.

But the fundamental source of emperor-worship is to be found in one of the primitive tendencies of Roman thought, viz., the veneration of the individual human spirit, the worship of the Genius. The primitive Roman worshiped—in his utilitarian, not to say commercial, fashion—not only the forces of external nature

<sup>1</sup> For a full treatment of the subject see E. Beurlier, *Le Culte Impérial; son histoire et son organisation*. Paris, 1891. A shorter account is given by G. Boissier, *La religion romaine*, Vol. I.



which influenced his life, but also the power that is active within each human being—the Genius of the man, the Juno of the woman. These terms appear from their derivation to have referred originally to the power of reproduction, but they came to designate the total personality of the individual, or rather the duplicate of that personality, identical with the self, yet somehow superior to him and determining his earthly destiny. From the earliest to the latest times the Genius of the *paterfamilias* was worshiped in every home in connection with the other household gods, the Lares and Penates. But the conception of the ruler as the father of the nation was familiar to every Roman. *Pater Patriae* was one of the earliest of imperial titles. The constantly recurring worship of the Genius of the father by the whole household, including slaves, freedmen, and clients, could not fail to suggest the worship of the Genius of the emperor on the part of all his subjects.

But the Genius designated the spirit of the individual in his earthly existence only. As it was born with him and accompanied him throughout life, so also it died with him. Yet the primitive Roman was a firm believer not only in the continued existence but in the divinity of the souls of men after death. Though their abode was in the lower world, they were felt to be allied by virtue of their immateriality and immortality with the gods above. This sentiment was naturally most strongly felt by each person toward the spirits of his own ancestors. Cicero quotes with approval the ancient formula, "Let each regard his own dead as divine." Since the spirits of ancestors were believed to influence the lives of their descendants for good or ill, offerings were made to them to secure their favor, and fixed days for such offerings were appointed in the Roman official calendar. It is obvious that as the worship of the Genius facilitated the introduction of the cult of the living emperor, ancestor-worship in like manner prepared the way for the deification of the emperors after death.

The Roman worship of rulers began with Julius Caesar. Divine honors were paid to him during his lifetime. Before his return to Rome after the victory at Pharsalus his statue was erected on the Capitoline bearing the title demigod, which, however, he afterward ordered erased. After his return his statue was placed among

those of the ancient deities in the circus. Another statue was inscribed *Deo Invicto*. Games were established in his honor as if he were a god. All this was pure flattery, which was probably taken seriously by no one, least of all by Caesar himself. It was merely the recognition of his newly won supremacy over the Roman world, and as such was accepted by him, just as he accepted the legend of the descent of the Julian family from the goddess Venus and built a temple to her as Venus Genetrix, the mother of his race.

This extravagant homage irritated his enemies and was doubtless one of the influences that led to his assassination. But Caesar's death transformed the compliments of his flatterers into a genuine cult. Popular enthusiasm over his achievements and indignation at his death found expression in religious adoration. It was really the Roman populace that raised Caesar to the rank of a god. The common people, Suetonius tells us, were convinced of his divinity. But Octavian, who as the emperor Augustus was destined to succeed him as sole ruler, promptly identified himself with the popular movement. The senate formally conferred upon Caesar the title of Divus, "the deified," and ordered a temple to be erected for his worship.

When Octavian by the defeat of his rivals brought the whole Roman world under his sway, he too was universally hailed as a god. There was doubtless the same mingling of flattery and sincerity in the homage paid to him as in that accorded to Julius Caesar, and his attitude toward it was much the same as that which had been taken by Caesar. As the grand-nephew and adoptive son of Julius he used the title *Divi Filius* in documents and on coins. The title Augustus, "the venerable," conferred by the senate and adopted by him as a surname, had a religious significance as designating one worthy of reverence, and marked him as more than man. But Augustus refused to accept divine honors at Rome. He allowed no temple to be erected to him in the city. He was under no illusion as to his divine powers. When envoys came to report to him that a palm had sprung up on one of his altars, he made light of the alleged miracle with the remark, "Evidently you do not often burn incense there." Yet for political

reasons he encouraged the new worship in the provinces and even permitted the provincials to build temples in his honor, but always with the proviso that they be dedicated to the goddess Roma as well as to himself. Roman citizens in the provinces were forbidden to share in the cult of the emperor, but might worship the deified Julius in connection with the Dea Roma. At the close of the reign of Augustus the imperial cult had spread throughout the provinces and had even invaded Italy, and wherever it was established it already exceeded in popularity all other forms of religious worship.

Although Augustus had steadily rejected all divine homage at Rome during his lifetime, immediately after his death in 14 A.D. the senate passed decrees conferring upon him the title *Divus* and providing for his worship as a god. The unpopularity of Tiberius, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian prevented their deification by the senate, though they had been worshiped in their lifetime, especially in the eastern provinces. With these and a few other exceptions, every emperor down to the fall of the western empire in the fifth century was consecrated after death. In the earlier days the deification of a deceased emperor was the expression of popular esteem. But in later times character and ability were often disregarded and the honor became a formal one, conferred as readily upon Commodus and Caracalla as upon Marcus Aurelius or Constantine. It is noticeable that the recognition of Christianity did not interrupt the creation of imperial deities. By this time, however, the cult had largely lost its religious character. Other members of the imperial family besides reigning emperors frequently received formal deification. The total number of persons who were raised to the rank of *Divi* during the five centuries from Julius Caesar to Valentinian III was seventy-four, of whom thirty-eight were rulers of the whole or a part of the empire, and sixteen were women.

The forms of the imperial cult were much the same in character and presented the same variety as the worship of the older divinities. The worship of the living ruler and that of the deified emperors were in general identical, but with certain differences in detail. The living emperor was sometimes identified with one of the ancient deities, especially in the East. Caligula was wor-

shipped as the Sun at Thyatira, Nero as Apollo, and Hadrian as Zeus in many cities. But though honored as a god under his own name, the emperor rarely assumed the title *Deus*; his usual designation was *Aeternitas*, used in a personal sense like *Majestas* or our "highness." His *Genius* was invoked in oaths, and such oaths had the same validity in the courts as those taken in the name of Jupiter himself. His statues were sacred and, like the statues of the gods, gave the right of asylum.

The deification of a deceased-emperor was authorized by a formal decree of the senate, which alone had power to introduce new forms of worship. But the senate acted at the suggestion of the reigning emperor, and divine honors proposed by him were rarely denied. The ceremony of consecration usually occurred a number of days after death, when the body had already been cremated or placed in its sarcophagus. It was therefore represented by a waxen image resting on an open bier. The bier was carried to the Forum accompanied by a distinguished procession. After the funeral oration, delivered from the rostra by the reigning emperor, the procession passed to the Campus Martius, where the funeral pyre had been constructed. This was of wood, tower-like in form, several stories high, draped with richly embroidered cloths, decorated with paintings and medallions, and fragrant with perfumes, fruits, and flowers. Here in the presence of the imperial family, the magistrates, the senators, the knights, the court officials, and bodies of cavalry and infantry, the bier was placed within the pyre, the funeral torch was applied, and as the flames burst forth an eagle was released from the summit and soared into the heavens, typifying the ascent of the emperor's spirit to its new abode among the gods.<sup>2</sup>

The private worship of the emperors on the part of families and individuals was simple, consisting chiefly in the burning of incense before the image of the emperor and in offerings of food

<sup>2</sup> A relief on the pedestal, now in the Vatican gardens, of the column of Antoninus Pius depicts the apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina. See the frontispiece. The emperor and empress, accompanied by two eagles, are borne to heaven by *Aeternitas*, the central winged figure. The sitting figure at the right represents Rome in the act of decreeing the apotheosis; that on the left personifies the Campus Martius where the final act of deification took place. See *Römische Mittheilungen*, 1912, 1-20.

and drink in connection with the worship of the household gods. The public worship was elaborate and costly, including not only offerings and sacrifices but public games of every sort—chariot races, gladiatorial shows, athletic exhibitions, dramatic and musical contests—often lasting several days. The expenses were defrayed partly by the imperial government, partly by a tax levied by the local authorities in the provinces or in the cities, and partly by contributions on the part of individuals.

The public imperial worship took several distinct forms, which may be designated as the Roman cult—the worship of the *Divi* at the capital, the provincial cult—conducted by the provinces as such, the municipal cult—conducted by the individual cities, and the popular cult—the organized worship on the part of the lower classes. The worship of the deified emperors naturally flourished at Rome, where they were best known and likely to be longest remembered. Separate temples were dedicated to many of them in the city, as the existing remains of the temples of Caesar, Augustus, Vespasian, and Antoninus still testify. In the provinces the actual head of the empire was the chief object of veneration, though nominally the goddess Roma and usually the *Divi* were associated with him. The provincial cult was in charge of a council representing the cities of the province. Its center was usually the provincial capital, where the imperial temple was located and where the chief festival was held each year, generally on the emperor's birthday. The city worship both in Italy and in the provinces usually arose as the expression of gratitude for some special favor or as a compliment on the occasion of a visit of the emperor. The adherents of the popular cult were the commercial and artisan classes, chiefly freedmen, who were in general excluded from all official positions, even in the municipalities, and were therefore flattered at being brought through this cult into relation with the head of the state.

The priesthoods of the imperial worship, of whatever type, conferred the highest distinction upon those who held them. The priests, except those of the popular cult, bore the title *Flamen*, an ancient and venerable one, held from the earliest times by the chief priest of Jupiter, Mars, and other deities of the first rank.

The Flamines of the Divi at Rome were usually members of the imperial family. Elsewhere the priests must be men of high standing in their community and class and also of some wealth, for they were expected to contribute largely to the expenses of the worship. The seat of the imperial cult was known as the *Augusteum* or *Caesareum*—terms originally applied to temples of Augustus and the deified Julius, but later, when their names became mere imperial titles, designating the place of the worship of the emperors in general. This was often the most imposing and most frequented temple in each city.

If now we pass from the forms of the imperial cult to its spirit, we must consider it, not only from the religious point of view, but in its relation to the personality of the emperor and especially with reference to its political importance. The Romans did not sharply distinguish religion from politics; for religion was a function of the state, and the worship of the gods which were recognized by the state was part of the duty of the citizen. Emperor-worship therefore expressed the attitude of the worshiper toward the emperor as the embodiment of imperial power. The spontaneous growth and speedy popularity of that worship among all classes of people in every part of the Roman world marks the general recognition of the imperial government as the dominant force in public and private life and of the reigning emperor as a sort of earthly providence. The emperors were from the first fully alive to the political significance of the worship offered them. They accepted the religious devotion of the people as an evidence of political loyalty. The association of the worship of the reigning emperor with that of the goddess Roma tended strongly to give to it an impersonal and political character.

Yet as time went on the cult of the living emperor became increasingly personal. Though still addressed, as at first, primarily to Roma as the symbol of imperial authority and secondarily to the emperor as the instrument of that authority, the thought of the worshiper was gradually withdrawn from the abstract divinity and centered itself upon the personality of the actual ruler. The worship of the deified emperors had the same political character; for the divine honors paid them after death were but the

continuation of the deference inspired by their imperial authority during life. Yet their worship had at the same time a distinctly personal quality. In the case of the nobler emperors it was the expression of genuine respect for their virtues or of appreciation of their services to the state. In the provinces, however, the cult of the *Divi* was generally united with that of Roma and the reigning emperor and thereby largely lost its personal character.

To distinguish and measure the religious element in the worship of the emperors is a more difficult matter. Did the worshipers in the imperial temple really believe in the divinity of the emperors? Did the emperors themselves believe in their own divinity, present or future? It must be remembered that to the Greek or Roman the distance between the divine and the human was infinitely less than to us. Even the greatest of the polytheistic deities was an insignificant being in comparison with the omnipotent, all-wise God of modern theism, while the minor divinities were but slightly magnified men. The Roman conception of divinity as applied to the emperors had something of the ambiguity that attaches to the word divine itself, which they used, just as we do, not only in the strict sense of superhuman, but in a rhetorical way, as a mere superlative, in the sense of godlike. The emperor cannot have been regarded, at least in his lifetime, as literally superhuman, even though he was honored as a god with every outward show of reverence. In the thought of the worshiper the divinity of the living emperor can only have meant a decided superiority, of one sort or another, to other men. Each worshiper's conception necessarily varied with his character and mental capacity; for then as now men created God in their own image. The average Roman was an ignorant and superstitious believer in the gods. But to him the distinguishing attribute of deity was power. Wisdom and morality in the highest sense hardly entered into his notion of a god at all. To the common man, therefore, the power wielded by the absolute ruler of a world-empire doubtless appeared so inconceivably great that he had no difficulty in believing him the equal of any of the gods. If the essence of divinity is the possession of power, then surely the all-powerful emperor must be divine.

But what shall we say of men of intellect and character, the poets, rhetoricians, and philosophers who lent their talents to the glorification of the imperial deities? Surely they were not dazzled by the splendor of imperial power nor blind to the mental and moral defects of their rulers. Such men, if they believed in the gods at all, held a high conception of deity. They rejected the myths which attributed human passions and follies and immoralities to the immortal gods. They certainly did not accept the divinity of a Caligula or a Caracalla, living or dead. They might, however, consistently worship such emperors as Augustus or Trajan or Marcus Aurelius, whom they honored for their ability as rulers and for their character as men, thereby testifying that they believed them to possess those super-eminent qualities and capacities which men attribute to their gods. But most men of intelligence in the Roman empire were skeptical as to the existence of any gods whatsoever and cannot therefore have believed sincerely in the divinity of the emperors. The formal worship of their rulers on the part of the majority of intelligent men, while it may have expressed personal respect and political loyalty, can have had no strictly religious quality.

The cult of the deified emperors presents the problem in a slightly different form. Can the members of the senate have really believed in a god whom they had just created by their votes? Yet the emperor Tiberius and his mother Livia are said to have offered sacrifices to Augustus as a god. Germanicus tells his soldiers that the deified Augustus looks down upon them from his abode in the heavens. Pliny assures us that Trajan believed in the divinity of his predecessor Nerva. But these and similar acts and utterances may well have been prompted wholly by political and personal motives; hence they fall short of proving a distinctively religious faith in the divinity of the emperors. To the believer in personal immortality it may have seemed possible—in view of the mystery that envelops the state of the disembodied spirit—that one who on earth had reached the summit of human greatness and exhibited the noblest human virtues should after death rise to the rank of a god. But the great mass of thinking men were quite as skeptical about personal immortality as con-



cerning the existence of the gods. They can hardly therefore be supposed to have believed in the divinity of the deceased emperors, regarding whose continued existence they were in doubt. A hint as to the feeling of the emperors themselves is furnished us in the famous remark of Vespasian on his deathbed, "I suppose I am becoming a god," which is cited by his biographer as an instance of his love of a jest, but which doubtless reflects the rude soldier's skepticism as to his approaching divinity. In brief, then, while the ignorant multitude worshiped the emperors, living and dead, in a blindly superstitious fashion, and the skeptical majority of intelligent men paid them a purely formal and conventional homage, a devout minority, who still believed in the gods and in immortality, may have viewed them with some measure of true religious sentiment.

The imperial cult reached the height of its popularity in the second century, but thereafter gradually lost its religious importance until in the fourth century it was completely secularized. The decline of emperor-worship was connected with the general decay of the old religion. After the recognition of Christianity the formal public worship of the emperors soon came to an end. Yet a large part of the old ceremonial, because of its political importance as the highest expression of loyalty, survived for nearly two centuries. The custom of kneeling before the emperor and before his statue was retained, though the practice was disapproved by the church. The emperor's acts were called sacred, his virtues divine, and the epithet eternal was added to his name. The title *Divus* was formally conferred by the senate upon the deceased emperors, but it had become a mere mark of respect and was freely used by Christians as well as pagans. In the provinces the priests of the imperial worship were still elected by the local council, but the functions both of priests and council were purely political. The machinery of the municipal and popular cult also survived under the same restrictions. Constantine even permitted the city of *Hispellum* in *Umbria* to build a temple in honor of his family, but on the condition that no pagan worship should be performed in it.

The attitude of both Jews and Christians toward the worship

of the emperors had always been hostile, as might have been expected. Caligula once ordered his statue to be set up in the synagogues in Alexandria and in the temple at Jerusalem. The Jews made vigorous protests without effect, but the assassination of the emperor prevented the execution of his purpose. No further attempt was made to impose emperor-worship upon the Jews.

The Christians were not so fortunate. Yet their position was logical and was clearly and consistently maintained. They honored the emperor as ruler, but declined to recognize him as a god. This distinction the Roman authorities refused to admit. They insisted that the worship of the national gods—and the emperor in particular—was the duty of every citizen and that to refuse was an act of disloyalty. Hence the mere profession of Christianity was regarded as a crime against the state. One who was accused of that crime might clear himself by the simplest act or word implying reverence for the gods or acceptance of the divinity of the emperor. Several notable instances are recorded in which this test of loyalty was applied to the Christians. Pliny in his well-known letter to Trajan reports that as governor of Bithynia he required them to worship the gods and to offer wine and incense before the emperor's statue. Polycarp, the aged bishop of Smyrna, when commanded by the proconsul, as the condition of his release, to swear by the Genius of the emperor, replied, "You do not know what I am. I am a Christian."

But while the church never relaxed its protest against the worship of the emperors, it did not forbid its members to participate in such ceremonies and functions of the imperial cult as were non-religious in character, especially in the later centuries when its religious aspect was becoming less prominent. As early as 300 A.D. Christians were permitted to hold the imperial priest-hoods and perform the civil duties of the office, but were forbidden, on pain of excommunication, to conduct sacrifices in honor of the emperor or to preside at the gladiatorial games, which the church condemned. Even after Constantine, when public sacrifices were no longer offered to the emperors, the church looked with disfavor upon the secularized cult, doubtless because of its association with paganism; for its external features—the priesthoods, the temples,

the feasts, the games—were still identical with those of the old religion. On moral grounds, too, a large part of the surviving ceremonial—the excessive adulation of the emperor, the license and extravagance that accompanied the festivals, and especially the brutality of the gladiatorial sports—was repugnant to Christian feeling.

The growth of emperor-worship was contemporary with the rise and spread of the Christian doctrine of the deity of Jesus. The question of a possible relation between the two movements is an interesting one. The points of contrast are obvious and striking. The emperor, standing at the summit of worldly greatness, was deified by official decree as the incarnation of political power, regardless of his character or worth. Jesus, rejected by his countrymen and condemned by the state, was venerated by his disciples as the ideal of purity, spirituality, and divine love. That the belief in the divinity of Jesus can have been suggested by the prevalent worship of the emperors is highly improbable, especially as that belief originated precisely in those circles in which the most bitter hostility had always been felt toward emperor-worship. But it is not at all impossible that, as Christianity became known throughout the Roman world, the acceptance of Jesus' divinity by converts from paganism may have been facilitated by their familiarity through the imperial cult with the idea that one who lived on earth the life of a man might at the same time possess a divine personality which was destined to survive in the life after death.

## HARNACK, LOISY, AND THE GOSPEL

PROFESSOR GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT, D.D.

Dorset, Vt.

"Who do men say that I am?" was the question of the Great Prophet on nearing the second crisis of his career, and various conflicting answers were at once given to his query. Were he, today, to ask the question, What do men say that *my gospel* is? various and conflicting answers would be given, and among them perhaps none more thoughtful and weighty than that of the Protestant Harnack and the Catholic Loisy. The Master could not agree with both, for they are sometimes far apart. It is quite possible that he would not altogether agree with either one. It may yet be many centuries before the depths of his genius will be sounded even by the most gifted follower. But it is probably safe to say that since the rise of modern criticism there have not been two answers to this fundamental historical question which have been more worthy of the attention of the church. Alike in their agreement with each other and in their disagreement they are significant both as the conclusions of scientific scholars and as signs of the times.

On the preliminary question of the sources of our knowledge of the Founder of Christianity Harnack and Loisy are in substantial agreement. Both set the Fourth Gospel aside as unhistorical. Harnack believes that, with great care, a little historical information may be derived from it; Loisy holds that every verse of it is dominated by the author's speculation on the Logos.

This point of agreement is a sign of the times. Scholarship is coming at last to a final rejection of the Fourth Gospel as a source of information on the life and teaching of the Master. This means a pretty sweeping revision of our *Lives* of Jesus and a very different conception of his personality.

Harnack and Loisy not only look away from John to the earlier gospels, but they see in these writings various strata of unequal historical worth. Here the French critic goes somewhat beyond the German. Thus, e.g., he sees in the oldest gospel, as well as in

Matthew and Luke, abundant indications that even this had passed through various revisions, and that in this process of change Christ had been idealized. Loisy also sees in Matt. 11:25-27 a product of Christian tradition. But it will be well to turn at this point to the main question: What is the gospel?

Loisy suggests that the difference between his answer to this question and that of the Berlin professor is this, that Harnack conceives of Christianity as a *fruit*, while he himself conceives of it rather as a *seed*. Harnack "peels" this fruit, continues the French critic a little sarcastically, with such perseverance that one wonders whether anything will remain at the end. True, Harnack does "peel" the fruit, that is, in other words, seeks to reduce the gospel to its simplest terms; but, on the other hand, does not Loisy pack so much into his "seed" that one wonders whether anything religious will be left out?

The gospel may be adequately described, according to Harnack, in either of three ways. It is the message of the kingdom of God, or it is the message of God and the infinite value of the soul, or, finally, it is the message of the better righteousness and the command of love.

Jesus shared the views of his people in regard to the kingdom, but he had also a deeper view peculiar to himself, and it is this deeper view to which the central place should be given in any just estimate of his message. What was peculiar to his thought of the kingdom was its pure spirituality. It is the rule of God in the individual heart. It "comes" when the individual receives it. But the early disciples failed to hold the truth of the *present* reality of the kingdom and became absorbed in the thought of the kingdom's future manifestation.

But while all the teaching of Jesus may thus be grouped about the one great thought of the kingdom of God, we get his meaning more "certainly" when we consider his message about God and the infinite worth of the soul. The fatherhood of God and the sonship of man are the substance of the gospel. From this point of view Christianity is seen to be, not a system of statutes and ordinances, like other religions: it is religion itself.

But there is yet another point from which the gospel may be

viewed. It can all be conceived as an *ethical message*, viz., the message of a heart-righteousness whose motive is love. This is at root one with religion, for love of the neighbor is the sole expression on earth of the love of God, which is kept alive in humility.

It will be noticed that in this description of the gospel *Jesus* has no place. According to Harnack, the gospel, as Jesus preached it, does not include the Son, but only the Father. Jesus is not *in* the gospel, as a *part* of the message; he is rather the *personal realization* and *power* of the gospel. Jesus was the "Son of God" simply in the sphere of knowledge. Because he knew himself to be the Son, he knew that he was the Messiah. Yet the rich new content which he poured into this old term shattered it. He was far more than the Messiah for whom men had hoped.

We turn now from Harnack to the Catholic scholar across the Rhine. We have already indicated his agreement with the German critic in regard to the sources. In his answer to the question, What is the gospel? we find also a measure of agreement. For Loisy sees the essence of the gospel in the announcement that the kingdom of God is at hand, and he finds the root of the kingdom in the soul of the believer. But here agreement ends. Loisy argues that since Jesus never defined the kingdom, we must hold that it was identical in his thought with the conception of the prophets and of John the Baptist. Therefore the essence of the gospel is just the essence of the Old Testament religion, refined and perfected. But though the kingdom exists, like a seed, in the soul of the believer, its perfection belongs to the future age. Jesus announced a kingdom whose coming was to be coincident with the end of history. All his teaching is to be understood only from this point of view. It was preliminary to the kingdom.

It may be noted here that in the rise and development of the church Loisy sees the coming of the "kingdom" for which Jesus bade his disciples pray. But whether this identification is necessary or probable or even possible, it may be well for the reader to consider. Very much depends upon it in Loisy's interpretation.

On this radical difference between Harnack and Loisy one remark may be ventured. Both writers see in Jesus' message of the kingdom something that is present and something also that is

future. The text of the gospel holds them and all readers to this conclusion. But the German writer regards the new element in Jesus' preaching as the most characteristic and important, while the French critic gives that place to the view which Jesus shared with his contemporaries and with the Old Testament. Is it not then, after all, something *outside of the text*—a certain opinion on the relative worth of that which is new in a man's message, and that which is traditional—which carries them so far asunder? Loisy has but one answer to the question, What is the gospel? It is simply the announcement that the kingdom of God is at hand. If the kingdom is thought of as a *feast*, the gospel is the invitation thereto.

It is conceded by Loisy that Jesus spoke little of himself, but he holds that the preaching of the kingdom *includes* the preaching of the Messiah. The disciples recognized that the place of Jesus in the kingdom was central when they asked for the seats at his right hand and his left. As Loisy identifies the gospel with the announcement of the kingdom, it is obvious that, in his thought, the gospel *does* include Christ.

But we have as yet only begun to unfold Loisy's conception of the gospel. It is, essentially, the announcement of the nearness of the kingdom, but in this simple fact the critic finds much involved. The gospel was not an abstract doctrine but a living faith, and whatever this faith has produced in the course of the centuries is inseparable from the gospel. Hence in the collective life of the church the essence of the gospel is continuously manifested.

What, now, are some of the doctrines and institutions which, according to Loisy, this living faith has produced? We are told that it produced the church, and in the church the pope who, through all the changes connected with his office, remains the father of the faithful, and whose power is of constant importance for the preservation of the gospel. It produced the worship of Jesus with its natural complement in the worship of the saints and of Mary. Loisy holds that without this worship of Jesus Christianity is only a philosophy, and has no right to the name of religion. Again, the whole sacramental system, though not all given in the gospel narrative, is a Christian institution and so from the gospel "seed." The immortal Christ acts through it.

True, Loisy as a critic admits that the worship of the saints does not belong to the gospel, and yet he holds that it truly proceeds from the "primitive revelation." Here, as it appears to me, the critic is lost in the philosopher. For this "primitive revelation," out of which proceeds the worship of saints, is the truth that God reveals himself to man in man. To this we naturally assent, and say with Loisy that the most divine thing in the world is not the crash of the thunder, nor the light of the sun, nor the unfolding of life, but is beauty of soul, purity of heart, perfection of love in sacrifice. But this primitive revelation is far more "primitive" than the gospel. For centuries prior to the gospel God had been revealing himself to man in man. This fact, then, is not distinctively *Christian*, and therefore nothing based upon it can be distinctively Christian. But is it not also the philosopher rather than the critic who speaks in the assertion that, because God reveals himself to man in man, therefore the *worship* of the saints and of Jesus is justified? May we then worship whatsoever reveals God?

Such, in broad outlines, are the answers that these distinguished critics have given to the question, What is the gospel? Close together on the purely critical question of the sources, they are, at times, very far apart on the *content* of those sources. The student of their writings feels, however, that the reason for this disagreement lies not so much in any indeterminateness of the gospel as in the heredity of the critics. One is a consistent Protestant, the other a consistent Catholic. To one therefore it is easy, to the other difficult, to isolate Jesus from Christian history and to study his word by its own light. To one it is relatively easy, to the other relatively difficult, to look past the church to the church's Founder. One thinks more of conserving the fruits of past centuries, the other of orienting the present by a direct appeal to the fundamental message of the Founder. To one nothing is normal development of the gospel that cannot point to its source in the essential revelation of Christ; to the other whatever promotes the life of the church is a veritable adaptation of the gospel.

Harnack and Loisy, the Protestant and the Catholic, are, however, one in the belief that religion alone can answer the deepest questions of life and that the purest form of religion is the gospel.



## THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

---

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
The University of Chicago

---

In the previous article we attempted to show what is the outcome of the use of the critical method of studying the Bible so far as the construction of doctrine is concerned. We found that biblical criticism led to the recognition of the fact that all expressions of doctrine in the Bible are historically conditioned. The religious convictions there expressed were inevitably shaped by the questions which men were forced to ask in order to preserve their religious faith. As the circumstances of life altered, the nature of the questions underwent a corresponding change. Consequently the content of doctrine could not remain constant. The historical interpreter finds the key to changes in doctrine in the altered experience which lies back of the change. Thus the center of interest is located in the religious experience which finds expression in the doctrines of the Bible. Theology, therefore, is compelled by biblical criticism to take account of the inner life of men as a primary factor in the construction of doctrine.

Now one of the most striking traits of modern life is the alteration of the content of human experience today as compared with experience of former centuries. We cannot here analyze this new aspect of life. We need only mention the fact that a new word has come into our theological vocabulary to characterize this changed mode of looking at things. The term "Modernism," which has been brought into prominence in the controversy within the Catholic church, is equally applicable to the Protestant situation. There are today numerous thinking men who are unable to find religious vitality in the older formulae of theology, and who are anxious to organize their convictions in such a way as to command the respect and the enthusiasm of those who think in terms of the modern conditions of life. The foremost problem before theologians today is that of meeting the questions which

have been thrust upon us by the changed experience of our own day. It will clarify our apprehension of the situation if we look at some of the typical ways in which this problem is being faced.

#### I. THE METHOD OF ECCLESIASTICAL CONTROL OF EXPERIENCE

The Catholic church is dealing with this problem of the claims of a "modern" experience in a characteristic way, which has the merit of consistency, but which, as we shall see, solves the problem for only a special class. Catholicism is striving to make earnest with the conception of an unchanging theology guaranteed by special revelation. This eternally valid body of doctrine is believed to have been committed to the church, which is charged with the responsibility of upholding the "truth" as over against all forms of error. Since the "truth" is given in the Catholic system, the modern mind, in so far as it diverges from this system, is assumed to be pursuing false doctrines. Even if the Modernist makes his appeal to experience, the appeal cannot be allowed; for mere natural experience is liable to error. Indeed, it can be shown by the citation of biblical texts that the main contentions of the Modernist do not receive the support of divine revelation.

The duty of the church and of the theologian is thus plain. Men must be prevented from acquiring such an experience as leads to Modernism. Wherever an alleged experience diverges from the type embodied in the theology of the church, that experience must be corrected and brought into line with orthodoxy. The correspondence between doctrine and life must be preserved, not by altering doctrine to fit the demands of the age, but rather by so controlling education that men will come to think in terms of the biblical world-view rather than in terms of modern naturalistic science. Thus until comparatively recently Catholic theology steadily opposed the Copernican view of the universe. Indeed, to this day, while allowing the new astronomy to be taught in scientific education, Catholicism carefully guards religious instruction so that children are taught to think of their relations to God as conditioned by a universe in which a literal heaven is located above us and a literal hell beneath. It is this necessity for keeping the religious thinking of children free from perversion by a non-biblical

world-view which is at the bottom of the Catholic's reluctance to allow education to be conducted by secular agencies. By carefully guarding the ideas which are allowed to enter a child's mind, it is possible to create and to foster the indispensable prerequisites of an authoritative theology which shall not yield to the importunities of modernist teachers. If men are thus taught to do their religious thinking in terms of a biblical world-view, a genuinely biblical theology may be conserved which shall vitally answer to the needs of religious experience. Whenever an incompatibility between theology and experience appears, harmony is to be restored, not by altering the theology, but by reconstructing the experience.

Protestantism also has generally adopted this method of securing a vital relation between theology and experience. Since the religious instruction of children in our Sunday schools is usually restricted to a knowledge of the contents of the Bible, and since ordinarily all teaching is carried on with the presupposition that everything thus learned is eternally true, it is entirely natural for Protestants to do their religious thinking in terms of the biblical world-view. It is true that this doctrinal system is likely to be disintegrated by the instruction received in high school or college. But many a young person never definitely brings together his modern science and his religious instruction in such a way as to become keenly conscious of the incompatibility. Whenever it is possible to preserve the type of experience which was embodied in orthodox theology, such a theology may be retained unchanged, and may serve the vital needs of men. That this program is being successfully prosecuted in the case of thousands of Christians today is unquestioned. That it will for a long time to come be the controlling policy of Catholic theology and of a large portion of Protestantism is equally certain. The penalty which such an ideal must pay is the forfeiture of co-operation between the secular sciences of our day and the religious propaganda. But those who are now in control of the Catholic church feel that this penalty is not too great if thereby the integrity of the religious life may be conserved. At any rate, the task of the theologian is comparatively simple, if he holds this conception of the relation between religion and experience. Theology has simply to record and expound with

fidelity the teachings of the Bible, and to show the error of all theories which conflict with the biblical utterances.

If we could be certain that everyone would respond favorably to this indoctrination, the problem of keeping theology in close relation to experience would be solved. But the strength of the Modernist movement in the Catholic church is evidence that such an ideal will actually meet the needs of only a portion of the present generation. Moreover, there is no immediate prospect that this situation will be changed. For as modern education makes us familiar with the hypotheses of natural science, as the better knowledge of other religions induces a critical attitude toward elements which seem to us incompatible with what we regard as true, it will become more and more difficult to hold the best minds to the docile conformity demanded by this theological ideal. In Protestantism, the partial failure of this method is evident to anyone acquainted with the mental habits of university students. If this ideal were to prevail, we should be certain to see the work of theologians sink to an inferior grade of scholarship, while the intellectual leadership of the world would be in the hands of men who had broken with traditional theology.

## 2. THE METHOD OF EXEGETICAL HARMONIZING

The majority of Protestant theologians today are not quite willing to take the uncompromising position assumed by the Catholic church. They realize that we can no longer confidently assume the possibility of successfully indoctrinating boys and girls so that they will withstand the influence of the secular sciences. It seems, therefore, better to seek some means of harmonizing our modern experience with the utterances of the Bible so that life may not be divided against itself. It is recognized that it would be a pity to array the science of our day against the religion of the churches. God's truth cannot contradict itself. What he has spoken in the Bible must be in agreement with what he has revealed in nature. If theologians have thought that there were contradictions between the two, it must be because they have not read aright the meaning of the Bible. Since, according to Protestant theory, no particular interpretation of the Bible is infallibly correct, it is open to anyone

to re-examine traditional expositions in the hope of finding a more truthful exegesis. Such is a course of reasoning familiar to us all.

For example, it has been a familiar task to show that the first chapters of Genesis, when "rightly interpreted," will yield results surprisingly in accord with the pronouncements of modern science. More extreme forms of the same spirit are seen in attempts to show that obscure prophecies have reference to inventions and discoveries of our own day. Who has not found the inevitable member of an adult Bible class, who is sure that the invention of automobiles is plainly predicted in Nah. 2:4, where we read: "The chariots rage in the streets, they jostle one another in the broad ways; the appearance of them is like torches, they run like lightnings"?

If the theologian is not hampered by exact canons of critical exegesis, he is usually able to make so good a showing of harmony as to remove the distress of those who had feared lest modern science might take away from us our traditional confidence in the Bible. But one feature of the situation soon appears which is not contemplated by the harmonizing theologian. He is likely to feel that when a harmony has been once established, his task is ended. When he becomes convinced that some particular form of the theory of evolution is true, he builds it into his theology as a permanent element. But after he has adjusted his religious doctrines to the new theory, he may find, to his dismay, that scientific men have moved on to another position. Indeed, the total effect of the attempt to harmonize Genesis and geology has been perhaps to weaken rather than to strengthen confidence in the ability of the theologian to be a real leader in religious thinking. For during the sixties and the seventies, these expositors of the Bible were confidently asserting that the doctrine of evolution was flatly in contradiction to the Scriptures. But during the eighties a few courageous theologians began to declare that the same Scriptures which had previously been thought to refute the doctrine really contained a marvelous anticipating of the later discoveries of science. Moreover, as the tentative hypotheses of scientists changed, the exegesis of the biblical account of creation had to undergo corresponding changes. The question naturally arose whether the

theologians really knew what the Bible taught, if they were under the necessity of making such frequent alterations. This situation is said to have been humorously characterized by Henry Ward Beecher, when he was asked by a scientific friend to state the exact teaching of the Bible concerning the origin of the world and of man. Beecher is said to have replied, with a knowing wink: "If you geologists will just tell me confidently what is the final and immutable teaching of geology on these points, I will undertake to tell my congregation the next Sunday morning exactly what Moses taught about these things. But so long as you scientists are not agreed, how can you expect us theologians to know exactly what the Bible does teach?"

Indeed, as soon as it becomes evident that exegesis is taking its cue from the findings of scientists, men will naturally ask themselves why they should not go to the scientists directly instead of taking their information at second hand. It is probably true that in the minds of many thoughtful people theology is hopelessly discredited just because of this not entirely disingenuous shifting during the past quarter of a century.

Biblical criticism makes absolutely impossible this sort of "harmonizing." It provides the means by which we may know what thoughts lay in the mind of the writer, and it proceeds to set forth those thoughts honestly and directly, without complicating the problem by inquiring whether the biblical writer did or did not hold modern views. After one has ascertained by exact processes of exegesis what views a writer held, it is possible to compare them with modern views on the same subject. But genuinely scientific interpretation of the Bible is not dependent on the findings of modern geologists in its endeavor to discover the teachings of Genesis. It reproduces as faithfully as possible the ideas which lay in the mind of the writer, regardless of the question whether we of today consider those ideas to be true.

Thus while the method of ecclesiastical control of exegesis can conceivably make use of critical scholarship, the method of exegetical harmonizing cannot do so consistently. The method of ecclesiastical control can declare that the Bible teaches this or that doctrine, and can summon men to believe it, if necessary, in spite

of scientific teachings. Critically ascertained results might thus be applied in the construction of dogmatics. It is true that the church has usually resorted to harmonizations, and is more concerned to secure a certain preconceived doctrine than to ascertain the historical meaning of biblical passages. But there is nothing to prevent it from employing criticism if it chooses. The ideal of harmonization, on the contrary, is completely shattered by biblical criticism. For truthful exegesis compels us to admit that the biblical writers held ideas on certain points which diverge radically from modern conceptions.

3. THE METHOD OF SUBSTITUTING FOR THE AUTHORITY OF THE  
BIBLE A NEW AUTHORITY WHICH SHALL GOVERN  
MODERN EXPERIENCE

The difficulties inherent in both of the above mentioned ideals are so keenly felt by most Protestant theologians of our day that there is a very general abandonment of the conception of authority which was current in the earlier days of Protestant theologizing. It is recognized that we cannot expect men today to include in their religious thinking all the items which seemed vital two or three thousand years ago. Consequently, the theologian is to make discriminations between what is essential in the biblical teaching and what is non-essential, between what is permanent and what is transient, between what is of eternal validity and what is of merely local significance.

Something like this ideal was familiar in the older theological thought which employed the scheme of different "dispensations" in the progress of biblical thought. The Mosaic dispensation was superseded by the work of Christ. Thus it has been possible to eliminate the ritualistic details of the Jewish codes from Christian theology. But the older theologians never seriously considered the necessity of making discriminations within the New Testament. The Old Testament, of course, was to be measured by the New; but where was there to be found a higher standard by which to judge the New?

In our day, however, it has become evident to many scholars that such discriminations must be made. We are gradually realizing

that the New Testament writings embody a view of history which we believe to have been discredited by the course of history itself. The doctrines of the New Testament are to a large extent formulated under the dominance of the expectation that the world was to come to a speedy end, and that the real values of life are to be found in the future miraculous kingdom rather than in the evolution of society in this present world. But we now see that nearly two thousand years have passed without any such cosmic catastrophe as was then expected; and we have adjusted our thinking and planning to the notion of an indefinite future of this world. We are attempting to understand better the laws of the existing universe so as to make them contribute positively to the upbuilding of Christian forces. In so far as we trust to the "powers of this world," we are doing our thinking in terms very different from those employed by the early Christians.

Many theologians today are trying to do justice to this modern point of view in their theology, by a discriminating use of the New Testament. Perhaps the most influential movement of this kind is that which goes by the name of Ritschlianism. Theologians of this school insist that it is vain to attempt to impose the sum-total of New Testament theology on modern men. Faith should be something freely achieved, not something compelled from one by an external authority. Thus the Ritschlian would ask us to read the New Testament for ourselves, and to ascertain by appeal to our experience what it is that compels our reverence and trust. As one influential theologian of this school has said, "A doctrine whose religious content we are not able personally to test should have no right in a system of dogmatics."<sup>1</sup> He thus excludes from his theology biblical cosmology, rabbinical exegesis, eschatological visions, and other elements which are not positive beliefs of the modern mind. He finds in the inner life of Jesus a compelling power which makes him certain that here we have the supreme revelation of God to men. The Ritschlian is willing to allow biblical criticism to work unhindered, for criticism can only serve to make us better acquainted with Jesus, and therefore to bring us more directly into contact with his marvelous personality. The overwhelming power of that personality to convince us of sin and

<sup>1</sup> Lobstein, *Introduction to Protestant Dogmatics*, Eng. tr., p. 179.



to assure us of divine forgiveness furnishes an experimental basis for the affirmation that Christ is the foundation of our theology. All else is to be judged by the revelation which we find in him.

The comparatively inexact methods of New Testament exegesis employed by the older Ritschlians enabled them to see in Jesus a personality so modern in his ideas that no serious conflict arose between current experience and the inner life of Jesus. But as biblical criticism has become more exact in its methods, and especially as a better understanding of the thought-forms of the first century has thrown light on the meaning of some teachings, it has become evident that Jesus himself was conditioned by the age in which he lived. The very possibility of such an interpretation of the consciousness of Jesus as has been given by Schweitzer<sup>2</sup> shows that we cannot count upon the sort of value-judgments which the Ritschlian assumed to be the inevitable result of acquaintance with the character of the historical Jesus. When this new aspect of exegesis becomes more generally evident, it is questionable whether it will any longer be possible to assume the general existence of precisely that type of religious experience which made the Ritschlian feel that he could at the same time preserve the appeal to experience and the appeal to authority. If there is too great a divergence between the ideas of Jesus and the ideas of the modern man, one who retains the Ritschlian conception of the task of theology will be under precisely the same temptation to "harmonize" the two as is the man who retains the traditional conception of the authority of the Bible while wishing to find justification for modern doctrines in the Scriptures. Indeed, it is already felt by many scholars that the portrait of Jesus has been "modernized" by Ritschlian interpreters in a way not warranted by strictly accurate historical interpretation. The appeal to the authority of Christ then turns out to be, after all, the appeal to such a character as modern experience would like to find in Christ.

A more realistic method of making an appeal to portions of the New Testament is proposed by members of the so-called "modern-positive" school of theologians. These scholars feel the impossibility of transferring ready made the doctrines of the New Testament to our own day. They therefore attempt to get back

<sup>2</sup> *The Quest of the Historical Jesus.*

of the doctrines to the "facts" which gave to the doctrines their religious significance. If we can determine the facts underlying redemption (the *Heilstatsachen*, as the Germans say), we can then expound their significance in terms of modern thinking. In these facts to which the New Testament writers gave their interpretation, we may perceive the peculiar manifestation of God's saving love. The subject-matter of theology will be found in these revelatory facts rather than in the more subjective realms of religious experience. But the specific way in which we think out the significance of the redemptive deeds of God may vary with the varying thought-forms of the centuries. We may, for example, have critical doubts concerning the adequacy of the accounts of the resurrection given in the gospels; but we may nevertheless recognize that the gospels give to us the means of affirming the "fact" of the resurrection, even if we hold a different "theory." We are not left entirely dependent upon the general experience of men; for we have this unique experience, pointing to a unique fact.<sup>3</sup>

It is to be noted that with this conception of the task, theology may make a thoroughgoing use of the historical method. The data which are to serve as the unique basis of theological construction are to be ascertained by an exact and unprejudiced scientific examination of the New Testament literature. There is to be no a-priori definition of revelation, and no predetermined theory as to the exact nature of the data which are to constitute the special court of appeal. But it is nevertheless felt that by the use of the empirical method we can attain certain objective facts which shall constitute a basis of certainty similar to that of the older evangelical theology, and that we shall therefore be relieved of the perplexity and confusion which it is felt would result if all vestiges of authority should be eliminated.

The aim of this ideal is clear; and it seems to furnish a definite program by which we may at the same time preserve the critical method which is so essential a part of modern experience and the

<sup>3</sup> This "modern-positive" position has received vigorous treatment in Principal Forsyth's *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* (New York, 1908). A carefully worked-out exposition of a somewhat similar conception of the task of theology is presented by Professor Shailer Mathews in an article entitled, "A Positive Method for an Evangelical Theology," *American Journal of Theology*, January, 1910.

appeal to the New Testament which is so essential to effective preaching. But in actual practice the proposed procedure encounters certain difficulties which will perhaps prevent it from being entirely satisfactory to those who are seeking an authority-theology.

In the first place, there is the difficulty involved in the fact that historical science, like any other science, cannot come to conclusions which are infallibly certain. At any time new data may come to light which will compel a modification of existing conclusions. Now the basis of confidence in the older evangelical theology was found in infallible truths. But the data reached by historical science are not at all of this changeless character. Indeed, in the realm of the New Testament, the passage from the recorded convictions of the writers to the historical "facts" lying back of these utterances is so involved, for the most part, in ingenious conjectures, that only an exceptionally self-confident critic would claim finality for his own conclusions. Thus a theology which appeals to the "facts" discoverable by historical criticism will inevitably be too tentative to be able to satisfy those who wish "absolute" certainty in doctrine.

In the second place, psychology has something to say about the realistic conception of "facts" underlying this procedure. When the historical critic undertakes to get back of the interpretation of a given writer, and to distinguish between fact and interpretation, the psychologist will easily show that what has really occurred is the substitution of the critic's idea of what occurred for the idea of the earlier writer. The earlier naïve interpretation is replaced by a later expert interpretation. The latter is, indeed, more consistent with our view of reality; but that is only because we hold certain conceptions which may or may not be more adequate than those of the earlier witnesses. Take, for example, the attempt to get behind the gospel narratives concerning the resurrection of Jesus, in order to discover the "facts." When the critic has done his work, no matter what his conclusions may be, he has simply substituted his own interpretation for that of the evangelists. All that a "modern" theologian can do is to state that he prefers to build on the interpretation of a twentieth-century scholar rather

than on that of a first-century apologist and missionary. He is working with *ideas* rather than with realistic "facts."

If what has been said be true, it is evident that it is vain to expect the processes of historical criticism to yield the older sort of dogmatics. Historical criticism means the adoption of the empirical method. The older dogmatics, building on the basis of authority, demanded the deductive method, whereby conclusions were established by appeal to a super-empirical realm of truth. The only possible way in which to unite criticism and dogmatism would be found in the Catholic church, which might, if it saw fit, require every Christian to hold as true the conclusions of certain authorized critics. But in Protestantism, where there is no such compelling authority, the adoption of critical methods in the interpretation of the Bible must eventually lead to the employment of the inductive method rather than the deductive in the construction of a theology. The present prevalence of the Ritschlian ideal and the currency of various types of "modern-positive" theology show how reluctant the religious world is to part with a method by which experience may be corrected by divine authority. But it is also evident that if a theology is to be constructed on the basis of an appeal to such authority, the most successful theology will be the one which can make the strongest authoritative appeal. In the construction of an authoritative dogmatics Catholicism and Protestant orthodoxy have the advantage over all types of thinking which make concessions to Modernism. On the other hand, the fact that such concessions are being welcomed by so many Christians is evidence that the method of authority is not successfully meeting the needs of those who are accustomed to a different way of arriving at their conclusions.

The next article will inquire more in detail concerning the application to theology of the empirical method which characterizes the procedure of biblical criticism.

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE

## A CONSTRUCTIVE STUDY

### II. SOME CONTRASTS BETWEEN THE OLDER AND THE NEWER METHOD OF CONCEIVING THE PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

---

PROFESSOR HERBERT ALDEN YOUTZ, PH.D.  
Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N.Y.

---

The doctrine of a future life is a growing fact and not a constant quantity. In the large, this growth expresses a twofold social advance: (1) the development of religious conceptions—more specifically the growing idea of God; (2) the developing ethical consciousness. But there is no abstract and independent sense in which the religious and moral life of men advances. Religion and morals are articulated into the conceptual life of the race in terms of which we express our convictions about reality, cosmical, social, psychological, scientific, and philosophic. Morality and religion are human facts, and as such reflect the forms of our intelligence in every field of its activity. So in inquiring about the laws of the growth of a spiritual doctrine like that of a future life, we must give heed to the changing methods of thought and the changing conceptual forms which have successively dominated the progressive life of society. Our forecast of the future state of any vital doctrine—our estimate, indeed, of its intrinsic meaning for the present—must be in the nature of an induction from the laws of mind which have manifestly expressed or controlled the growth of the past.

This paper, then, has to do with some of the manifest contrasts between the intellectual atmosphere or climate in which men of the past formulated their spiritual problems and profounded their resolution, and the modern scientific way of thinking these same problems. And in this brief analysis we must constantly keep in mind that conceptual method, and not specific conclusions either of the past or present, is the real goal of our inquiry. Moreover, it

is the controlling "social consciousness" which conditions an age's thinking, and not some sporadic individual insight with which we have to do.

In characterizing somewhat specifically these fundamental contrasts between the earlier historic attitude touching belief in a future life and the modern attitude, an exhaustive or exact analysis is not necessary—is not indeed possible. It is sufficient for our practical purpose to point out some of the more obvious transformations that have taken place in our thought-world.

1. In a previous paper we pointed out that the distinctive thing in the modern method of approach to all problems is the newer recognition of relativity everywhere in our human world, where former generations assumed fixedness and finality. As related to the problem of a future life we may formally enumerate this principle again here as a shaping factor of immense consequence in producing a rational doctrine of a future life. A conception of truth which looks for fixed items of information and final conceptions of reality that shall become the absolute possession of all thinkers, conducts to absolute "systems" of thought; to finally authoritative and rigid "revelations"; to "infallible rules of faith and practice"—in short to dogmas that bear the image and superscription of the unchangeable "divine" or the unchangeable "truth" and which are therefore current for all times and peoples. This ideal of truth has controlled the eager search for a final revelation concerning an unseen world. Doctrines of future life born of time-needs have been erected as eternal "revelations." In particular, the Bible has been regarded as a textbook containing final information. Jesus' words have been scanned with the single intent of gaining the exact outline of the unseen spiritual. Among the multitude of strange and varied schemes of a future life that have been preached, and the definite charts of an unseen world that have been commended to the Christian church, the one ideal of truth was held in common that it is a final piece of information to be gained, and the repository of this truth is the Christian Scriptures. Practically all of the historic treatises on the future life that have had any orthodox standing, and have therefore been influential, have carried this implication of the truth of the Bible.

Now modern thinking about the future life rejects this fundamental presupposition. The spiritual value of the Christian Bible is exalted not less than by the older thinkers. But the mode of conceiving and using the Bible is radically altered. For it is viewed as a record of developing history and not as a body of oracles. The men who appear in the record as well as the men who produce the record are viewed in their historic perspective as *men* and in no way as actors or oracles. The Bible preserves to us the personal experiences, achievements, and convictions of men consciously controlled by the guidance of a living God. An unbiased exegesis of this record finds no final content or *absolutum* which shall serve to standardize future thinking and living; but only living principles given in terms of living history, which in turn can be received and known only in terms of the vital processes of human experience. Thus the whole principle of development is introduced into the past as freely as into the present, and the relativity of a given stage of truth and of revelation is recognized as freely in the past as in the present. Every interpretation of doctrine about life, whether present or future, must bear the test of our best thinking. "Handling the Word of God with reverence" means thinking the Bible record in terms that bring reality into it as a historic creation, and not the attempt to fit its mysteries, like mosaics, into our scheme of thinking.

Modern thinking, then, unlike the older, is released from the acceptance of an ideal of a somewhere given truth about the future life. Like all reverent thinkers, we are seeking to know the truth about the subject, feeling that the truth, *as we can best think it*, can alone set us free from superstition. Moreover, our conception of human thinking, individual and social, precludes the possibility of any finality of revelation about the future life. That is not a rational conception of our task. How may we and how must we think about this persistent, haunting conviction? To answer this question in the light of our best thinking and living and to justify our belief in a way that shall satisfy both the vital and rational tests of life: this seems to us the goal of philosophic construction of spiritual truth.

It must be noted that this changed attitude toward religious

truth has epochal consequences for the man who meditates about the "life everlasting." It makes a vast difference whether we are trying to establish an orthodoxy or are engaged in an unbiased inquiry into the truth. If a man digs in the earth seeking for some "hid treasure" his excavations will not resemble those of the cultivator who tills the soil to discover what it is capable of producing. The contrast between the newer and the older method of dealing with the problem of the future life is not unfairly typified by the parable of the Cultivator and the Excavator.

2. Another fundamental point of contrast between the older and the newer approach to the doctrine of the future life is expressed in the fact that whereas the historic forms of faith usually thought to buttress the belief by independent logical "proofs," such proofs today are usually regarded as beside the mark and unattainable. In other words, the future life was treated as an intellectual conception that must justify itself among other furnishings of the intellect by showing its connection with the "logical reason." Thus in the traditional treatment of the doctrine we find the scholastic rationalism grafted on to the original "absolute revelation," apparently with the intent to make certainty doubly sure.

It is sufficient here to say that this independent logical universal is little sought as the mark of certainty in fruitful thinking today. The pragmatic emphasis does much to correct the abstract rationalism of the traditional account. The confidence and the proof, as well as the form of the doctrine, are determined by what our best life yields and by what bears the test of life.

The original enthusiastic faith of the early church in a future life, however much it rested upon historic credentials, could only have come to such rich expression and such holy confidence in an experience which constituted the real ground for Christian optimism. And today the appeal of most effective thinking is largely away from the abstractions of logic and rational certainties, and directed to the rich content of the personal experience grasping spiritual realities in terms of vital activities, and achieving a confident outlook upon life in terms of personal relationships. In other words, our spiritual certainties rest back upon a moral achievement far more than upon a logical process. In attempting,



then, to state the Christian doctrine of a future life for today, we shall have less regard for logical universals than for the realities of the moral life. The evidence or "proof" and indeed the very experience out of which the belief in immortality arises is so predominantly an experience of the individual mind, conditioned by his own inner life, that formal logic is defeated. We are dealing here with a form of fact and knowledge so immediate and a form of certainty so personal that it does not yield to strictly "logical" methods. In other words, we grasp it rather through activities of will and character than through intellectual activities. And this is quite consistent with the pragmatic view of knowledge which rates personality and its grasp of reality as a vastly larger matter than intellectual apprehension.

The willingness of properly pragmatic thinking today to reckon with vital and constitutional needs, as over against an earlier rationalism, is a characteristic mark of modern thinking. The categories of truth are not chiefly intellectual but experiential. For the values of life are not chiefly logical values, but spiritual.<sup>1</sup>

3. Another vast difference between the realities of modern thinking and the realities of ancient thought is the difference which the thoroughgoing conception of law has brought. An earlier age which could separate the natural and the supernatural by a dualistic chasm saw no impropriety in making lawlessness the mark of the divine. Caprice and magic and miracle expressed whatever relationship was conceived to exist between the seen natural and the unseen supernatural. The divine presence and the divine power were best signalized by acts or occurrences which were insoluble on natural grounds. The passage from the natural world to the life of the invisible was construed as a cataclysmic, lawless act of the divine power. Eternal life was an unconditional gift offered at the end of temporal life; opening graves were a fitting exhibition of divine power; the raising of the dead to heavenly places a gracious act of divinity. The whole imagery under which the future was conceived spoke of a conception of life where law and consequence bore little relation to the power at work. The reality of

<sup>1</sup> Cf., e.g., Professor Scott's criticism of the Greek philosophy, in this series, *Biblical World*, July, 1911, p. 25.

the power is never in question. But the divine power is in no way conditioned or expressed by the thought of law.

Moreover—and this is even more consequential for our problem—the relation between the life of the individual here and the life pictured for him in the unseen future is not, in the older thinking, a relation determined by law. To be sure, God is just and bestows rewards and punishments. But divine justice is an arbitrary fact, not a living order of life, just as his gracious acts are conceived as arbitrary acts.

The conception of the future controlled by this obliviousness to the laws which bind our world into a rational universe resulted in all sorts of descriptions of the future and our relationships to it which are not assimilable to modern thinking. A law-saturated age demands this reality of thought which can only come by perceiving a nexus of law to link the visible with the invisible. Thought and conduct and imagination demand a consequential relation of law between the seen and the unseen—if the unseen is not to be disregarded as a realm of chaos or neglected as unreal. Unless there is unity in life, a unity which makes the unseen somehow one with the life we know, where the spiritual laws in operation here conduct us to a law-determined goal; then the doctrine of a future life no longer has a rational appeal. That life should grow and develop, blossoming into forms of reality to which our moral living conducts, and where our spiritual laws are not defeated but recognized; this is at least thinkable to the modern mind. That an omnipotent cataclysmic act should lift us out of the present order of life and knowledge, and present us with a heaven which does not recognize the moral and rational realities of this—this is not only unthinkable, but repugnant. We are interested in a future life which has its roots and its reason and its essential moral form in the spiritual activities of this. Indeed, this is the only moral doctrine of a future life that religion can hold. Only thus could a future existence be prefigured and hence rationally thought in terms of the realities which our best ethical experience knows. Our new heavens, like our new earths, must arise out of the materials of the creative faith by which we now live. Future existence must be thought as continued existence, and not as a strictly new and unrelated order.

The reticence and unwillingness to dogmatize about the future, which characterizes modern thinking, may be after all but a mark of deeper trust in an order-loving God, who works today by law in his world, and whose faithfulness may therefore be trusted for the future. It is ours to know the moral law and to perform it, and find our confidence in continued existence in the doing of things which are intrinsically worth while.

4. Then there is the sweeping change in the mental conceptions in terms of which we measure and evaluate life in every realm of our thinking. Cosmologically, psychologically, socially, metaphysically, scientifically, we are living in a changed thought-world from that of our ancestors. The cosmologies of the ancients could confidently place heaven in the skies and hell beneath. The ascension into heaven was the expression of a pictorial and realistic metaphysics. The bodily resurrection was a necessary thought-form for an age whose psychological notions demanded a material organism for spiritual reality. Doctrines of intermediate states, of purgatory, of formal assizes, and the like are not to be regarded as sacred ultimates of revelation, but as necessary forms of solution of problems which arose out of current scientific and philosophic conceptions.<sup>2</sup> With the passing of their cosmologies and their metaphysical conceptions of reality, these traditional developments of doctrine lose their validity. The right to rethink the whole problem in terms of our own ruling conceptions of reality is obvious—a plain scientific duty indeed for the thinker of today who is emancipated from the traditional assumption that all religious explanations are eternally valid and to be endlessly repeated. This constitutional, optimistic conviction which refuses to believe that the grave means annihilation or that death has any power over our best spiritual achievement—how shall we construe this Christian Hope, and how justify it? This is the problem for us to solve in terms of our own best thinking, guided by the light which history affords.

Furthermore, it is a part of the same advance of thought which forbids the extreme individualistic conception of personality and

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e.g., Professor Paton's statement, *Biblical World*, March, 1910, p. 164: "Sheol was primarily a cosmological conception," etc.

frees us from the necessity of carrying all the familiar details of our bodily life over into the unseen world. A more rational psychology and especially a better estimate of spiritual and moral values enable us to leave out certain considerations as negligible which for former generations were matters of fundamental concern. Character, moral worth and activity, spiritual reality in its best estate may very well be freed from some of the familiar conditions that encumber it here. The essentials of spiritual existence and ethical values are the matters that our faith contends for. Our homes and other sacred social institutions which are the condition of our holiest and happiest fellowship here may be superseded by social forms which preserve and exalt the passion of love which constitutes the bond of social unity. Reverent scholarship is much more willing than formerly to be guided by the spirit of Jesus<sup>3</sup> and believe that "the power of God" will shape the forms of life, if we are faithful in our fundamental spirit. Hence, doctrine is chiefly concerned to know the essentials of righteous living here; and very little concerned with the conditions that surround life in an unseen realm. The confident conviction of law which a scientific age has brought has contributed not a little to confidence in a faithful God who may be trusted to bring appropriate consequences hereafter to holy living here.

Thus it might be shown that thought operates today with many conceptions that forever invalidate much of the terminology with which tradition surrounds the problem. Life and Death as abstract quantities, and the power of the individual to act in a representative capacity for the race, these thought-units of the New Testament do not express the forms of our convictions about these things. The apostle Paul's familiar argument which functioned with the thinking of his day are not simply to be repeated by us; they are to be interpreted in the frankest sense. Our doctrine of a future life must be given living expression in terms of conceptions as valid and vital for us as were these conceptions in their day.

These are suggestions of only a few of the lines of crystallization which constitute characteristic differences between the account

<sup>3</sup> Mark 12:24.

which a past age gave of "the life everlasting," and the account which modern thinking renders. We have no thought of offering a complete rationale of the problem. The whole matter, like all the data of the religious life, lies so deep and begins so instinctively that it is not completely amenable to analysis or logic. The philosophic motives, the conceptual materials, the instinctive or reasoned estimate of the worth or unworth of life, and the varying constitutional moods of optimism or pessimism—these all enter so intimately into our problem and shape it so subtly, weaving such a complex and changeable fabric of belief, that it is impossible to analyze the doctrine into absolutely simple elements. Like the rainbow to which our hope of immortality is so often likened, the historical doctrine of immortality reveals every hue and shade of our thought-spectrum, and shows the influence of the hopes and fears and passions of the race. As the laws of the physical insure a "bow of promise" in the skies so long as atmosphere and sun and rain endure, so the permanence of the belief in immortality seem to be as sure as the laws of the human. We can describe the forms of the past and the present hope and prophesy the future, confident that nothing can destroy the hope which does not destroy that which gives greatest distinction to the human—the spiritual nature. We have here pointed out some of the fundamental contrasts between the doctrines shaped by the life of the past and those shaped by today's life, in the endeavor to understand the formative factors at work in this universal impulse. In our next paper we shall attempt, a little more specifically, to expound the Christian interest in the problem, and the Christian account of it.

## SOME PRINCIPLES FOR SCRIPTURE INTERPRETATION

PROFESSOR EDWARD E. BRAITHWAITE, PH.D.  
University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Few matters in the realm of Christian scholarship have led to more diverse results than the interpretation of the Scriptures. One has only to call to mind a few cases based on rabbinical, allegorical, scholastic, and other modes of interpretation. Elkanah's two wives were taken to represent the synagogue and the church. Peter's two swords proved the pope to possess both spiritual and temporal authority. "The greater light" in Gen., chap. 1, represented the pope, and "the lesser light," the emperor. Proof of the Trinity was found in the fact that the letters of the second word of Genesis are the initials of the Hebrew words for Son, Spirit, Father. One of the shoes whose latchet John was not worthy to unloose was made to symbolize the Incarnation. Shiloh was identified with Messiah because the numerical value of the letters of the two names was equal. The world would last six thousand years because it was six days in being created, and in the Lord's sight a day was as a thousand years. From the injunction "Feed my lambs," it was inferred that popes had authority over kings.

Nor has more modern interpretation been free from almost equally unwarrantable methods. Not to mention many less plausible views, the commonly accepted understanding of the Song of Songs as a conversation between Christ and his church would scarcely occur to the ordinary reader without the allegorical chapter-headings of the King James version. Jesus could never be claimed as an ascetic except on the basis of a few isolated texts. The "proof-text" method, indeed, has been most general, though by it one may often establish two contradictory propositions. The authority of Scripture is even used to oppose the practice of vaccination (Matt. 9:12; Gal. 6:7), supported by the fact that most of those who are vaccinated become ill, though one might

as reasonably argue against a sea voyage from the common experience of seasickness. Opening the Bible at random to receive inspired direction is perhaps little better, though a device used even by John Wesley. While most such instances are to be credited to the untrained mind, there are doubtless others to be ascribed to a very different type of interpreter. One can scarcely refrain from mentioning here Cheyne's favorite "Jerahmeelite" theory, in which he claims that many names have been corrupted from Jerahmeel, such as Amalek, Hamul, Jamlech, Carmel, Kemuel, etc., making the Jerahmeelite clan of much greater importance than would appear. Erbt's theory that Elijah, Elisha, and Jonah correspond to the deities Shamash, Sin, and Ishtar, and these in their turn to the Babylonian gods Anu, Bel, and Ea, seems equally far-fetched.

In view of such conditions, one may well sympathize with Maurice's expression of wonder "that the faith of scientific men in the Bible has not utterly perished, when they see by what tricks we are sustaining it." The enumeration of certain principles, therefore, which may be adopted in the light of present-day knowledge, may be serviceable to the cause of better interpretation. Three groups of such principles are here proposed: historical, literary, and philosophical.

1. There may be emphasized at the outset the importance of considering the whole history of the formation of the Bible. As the canon was determined by vote, what if Ecclesiastes or Esther had been excluded, or if the Wisdom of Solomon or the letters of Clement had been accepted? The free use of one another's writings by the various authors is also to be observed. In the story of the rich young man, Mark has "Good Master, what shall I do . . . ? Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God." But in Matthew this becomes: "Master, what *good thing* shall I do . . . ? Why askest thou me *concerning that which is good?*" the purpose of the change apparently being "to avoid the appearance of our Lord's calling in question his own goodness, and of his refusing to accept the attribution to himself of what is divine."<sup>1</sup> Consider the significance of a list of altera-

<sup>1</sup> See Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission*, p. 18.

tions in the text, like that given by Jülicher,<sup>2</sup> including slips of the pen, faults of memory, confusions between related prepositions and conjunctions, marginal insertions, etc. Note again the many manuscript variations, such as the omission by some of Mark 16:9-20, and John 7:53-8:11. Compare Exod. 35-40 and its parallel Exod. 25-31 in the Greek and Hebrew texts, showing the strangest variations in order of paragraphs that are themselves almost identical, and proving that the whole section was in confusion until well down to the time of the Christian era. The Hebrew and Samaritan texts, likewise, exhibit discrepancies in the ages of the antediluvian patriarchs and in other dates and figures.

The recognition of a varying attitude toward doctrinal, ritual, theological, and moral standards embodies another essential principle. There is evidence, for example, of the widespread influence of the common notion of antiquity that each country had its own deity. Jonah fled toward Tarshish "from the presence of Jehovah" (Jonah 1:3). Ruth exclaimed: "Thy people shall be my people, *and thy God my God*" (Ruth 1:16), and Boaz claims a reward for her from "*Jehovah, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take refuge*" (Ruth 2:12). Naaman wanted to take back to Syria two loads of Israelitish earth, i.e., Jehovah's land, that he might set up a Jehovah altar (II Kings 5:17). The Assyrian king had to send back an Israelitish priest to teach the new colonists whom he had placed in Palestine the manner of Jehovah, "the god of the land" (II Kings, chap. 17). The circulation of the "book of the law"—Deuteronomy—marks a sort of boundary line between two different attitudes to the high places. Jehu's action in exterminating the house of Ahab is highly commended in II Kings 10:30, but severely condemned by Hosea (Hos. 1:4).<sup>3</sup> The ascription of David's numbering of Israel to Jehovah in II Sam., chap. 24, and to Satan in I Chron., chap. 21, is only a difference of theology. Early Israel made God the One Cause of all things. The second passage comes from a late period, and may be influenced by Persian theology, which was dualistic. There are different moral standards, failure to

<sup>2</sup> *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Eng. tr., pp. 588-99.

<sup>3</sup> For a fuller discussion, see Budde, *Religion of Israel*, pp. 125 ff.



recognize which has deceived even the elect. Luther countenanced the bigamy of Philip because the patriarchs had more than one wife. Professor E. F. Scott shows how the Fourth Gospel often corrects the misconceptions of the earlier disciples.<sup>4</sup>

Each author's distinctive point of view must also be carefully noted. We cannot judge the relative importance of the events in Chronicles by their prominence there, for the author's special interest leads him to expand his narrative at certain points, as when it has to do with the temple; while elsewhere he rigidly curtails it. The special standpoint of the Deuteronomic editor of Kings leads him to pass judgment on the kings according to their attitude to the high places. But this cannot be regarded as a permanent criterion comparable with New Testament standards. This implies that the biblical writers had important limitations. This they readily acknowledged, as did Jesus himself (e.g., Mark 13:32).

The historical background must, of course, always be kept in mind. Professor Kirkpatrick shows how New Testament Greek is wedded to Hebrew thought in the Septuagint, and cannot be rightly understood except through that version, and how important New Testament terms have already a history when they are adopted.<sup>5</sup> The "Minor Prophets" must be sealed books to those ignorant of the contemporaneous history. But read Amos or Hosea in the light of the movements of Assyria in the momentous eighth century B.C., and they are "minor" prophets no longer. The very order of the prophetic books suggests the hopeless confusion that must result without knowing their environment. A recent writer's tentative arrangement may be considered sufficiently correct for illustration. This gives the dates before Christ as follows: 740, 626, 592, 168, 745, 400, 760, 450, 450, 700, 650, 600, 630, 520, 520, 540.

Attention to the historical perspective is another highly important matter. The Epistle to the Hebrews argues at great length the superiority of Jesus to prophets and angels, to Moses and Aaron. But we admit all this before the argument begins. Of

<sup>4</sup> See *The Fourth Gospel*, pp. 302 f.

<sup>5</sup> See *The Divine Library of the Old Testament*, p. 126.

what value to us, then, is this epistle? The proper perspective shows us. While angels are practically absent from our theology, they had a large place with the Jews, particularly in later Judaism. We wonder that even early Christians should need such elementary instruction. How slightly they must have appreciated their new mount of privilege! Yet this is only typical of the appalling ignorance of Christ shown by his contemporaries in general. Again, if an inquirer today is told to "believe on the Lord Jesus," or, "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God," he is apt to declare that he has always believed this but without finding the peace for which he longs. It is another case of perspective. Men of the first century had difficulty in crediting Christ's great claim. The apostles expected that those who really believed in him would follow him. Here then is the vital application for us. Living in the keen realization of this fact, let us be sure that our lives correspond with the great truth we so readily acknowledge. Similarly, as to the greatness of Jesus in general. No Old or New Testament writer has adequately described him. He is, indeed, too great to be accurately classified or categorically defined. But how much better so, than if God had dictated an exact formal description. How vastly superior the simple gospel picture to the elaborate metaphysical definitions of the creeds.

2. Among literary principles, it is of first importance to recognize the oriental character of the Bible in general; and, in particular, the style of literature of the book or passage under consideration. In no other oriental book should we think of interpreting literally talking serpents or trees bestowing the knowledge of good and evil. What a difference whether Jonah be literal history or parable. If the former, the book ends in a decided anticlimax—Jonah praying to be allowed to die. But if a parable, a splendid climax is reached, showing, in contrast with Jonah's poor conception, how far-reaching is the love of God. Hosea is a case from the opposite point of view. The opening chapters certainly read like a personal narrative. Symbolic interpretations have been adopted, only because it has been felt that God would not command Hosea to marry such a woman as described. But the oriental mind does not face the same difficulty. Hosea could marry her without

recognizing any divine command or knowing her real character. Then, as in his love for her he tries to win her back, God uses his experience to show that his love for faithless Israel was certainly no less. The prophet could thus easily see afterward the hand of Providence in it all and truly say that God had led him to marry her—yea, even commanded it—that he might make more vivid the revelation of his unchanging love. When the Psalmist says, “The mountains melted like wax at the presence of Jehovah” (Ps. 97:5), the idea of a miraculous manifestation never occurs to a sane mind, as if this were prose. Why, then, should a miracle necessarily be chronicled in Josh. 10:12, 13, where the poetic form is properly adopted by the revisers?

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;  
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon.

Without opposition to miracles in general, one may see that this, translated into prose, may be only a prayer that sufficient daylight be granted to give the Israelites time to gain a victory. Apocalyptic literature, too, must be recognized as such. How many schemes for the future, for which Daniel and Revelation have been made responsible, have been proven delusive! Jülicher says of the latter: “Any extravagance could find its authority in this book, so long as people started from the false assumption that the author’s visions had already been, or would hereafter be literally fulfilled.”<sup>6</sup> Due allowance must likewise be made for the characteristic use of anthropomorphism. It need not be imagined that God uttered his creative edicts in human language. It is no more necessary to suppose that Abraham heard an audible voice telling him to offer Isaac than when a man now says that he was commanded by God to do a certain thing. References to God’s anger, joy, repentance, are marks of the same tendency.

Again, the literary material of the Bible is not only adapted for widely varying purposes, but for these purposes also there is no uniform value. While some books are suitable for devotional ends, the main interest of others is historical; but these may have very different historical value. Professor W. R. Smith went so

<sup>6</sup> *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Eng. tr., p. 266.

far as to say: "The practice of using the Chronicles as if they had the same historical value as the older books has done more than any other one cause to prevent a right understanding of the Old Testament."<sup>7</sup> There are also varying moral standards. No longer do we justify slavery or polygamy because they were approved by biblical writers. The Jews themselves made a distinction in their Scriptures, giving first place to the law, second to the prophets, and lowest of all to the writings.

The textual and contextual relations of a passage must, of course, be always regarded. This raises the question of the study of Hebrew. It may be doubted whether this is not in danger of being too greatly slighted. Even a moderate knowledge of Hebrew will bring within the minister's reach some of the best helps which he cannot otherwise adequately appreciate. And how can he without this comprehend the significance of "higher criticism," which goes directly back to the original languages? Besides, exegesis is one of the most fruitful sources of legitimate and forceful sermonizing. Professor G. A. Smith, in urging the study of Hebrew, says that it is the "painstaking students . . . who lay their hands on the prophet's heart and feel it beat; it is they who across the ages see the very features of his face as he calls; it is they into whom his style and music pass."

Our next natural consideration is that of the large human element in divine revelation. There has been too prominent a tendency to explain events solely from their divine point of view; e.g., the landing of William of Orange in England and its many beneficial results. The inscription on the medal commemorating the defeat of the Spanish Armada—*afflavit Deus et dissipati sunt*—appears to assign the whole matter to God. But if this be pushed to its logical conclusion, what about God's leading where there is no clear evidence of his interposition; and what about his presence in the ordinary affairs of life as well as the extraordinary? How many human adjustments had to be made to fulfil the promise to Abraham: "I will make of thee a great nation." The selling of Joseph and the oppression by one of the pharaohs are only two of the many human links in a long chain. The continuance of Judah

<sup>7</sup> See more fully *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, Lecture V.

long after northern Israel may be largely explained by the greater nearness of the latter to Assyria, by the comparative lack of unity in the north, and by the fact that the armies of Egypt and Assyria were constantly marching through the heart of Israel while they only skirted the border of Judah. Isaiah's prediction of Assyria's approach to Jerusalem and her subsequent fate (Isa., chap. 10) illustrates a prophet's limitations. While the outstanding feature of the prophecy was fulfilled, Isaiah was in error as to the route taken. The prophets evidently expected only a conditional fulfilment of many of their prophecies, as shown by their constant exhortations to repentance. Such a view tends to bring these events down to the plane of our own affairs, or, more correctly, to lift our human lives to their proper divine relations. If Moses and Isaiah and Amos were not subject to limitations like ours, their message to us is vitally weakened. But if, in spite of this, they could think and speak and act so divinely, they are a mighty inspiration to us in our struggle to realize the divine image according to which we are made and the divine ideal implanted within us.

It must further be remembered that our notion of literary property is distinctly modern. There was nothing in antiquity approaching our idea of copyright. The history of the text shows that there was great freedom in inserting notes and adding extraneous material. "While we write commentaries *on* the text, the early practice was to write commentaries *in* the text." Some books are compilations. The many titles in Proverbs (1:1; 10:1, etc.) indicate various sections, which occur in an entirely different order in the Septuagint version, in part as follows: 24:22; 30:1-14; 24:23-34; 30:15-31:9; 25-29; 31:10-31. Again, Jeremiah's oracles against the nations (chaps. 46-51) are placed by the Septuagint after chap. 13. This throws light on several characteristic features of biblical literature, e.g., (a) the incorporation of so considerable a section as Isa., chaps. 40-66, into Isaiah's original work; (b) the tendency to assign a book to some great name of the past, to strengthen its authority; (c) the interweaving of several documents into one product. In the story of the Red Sea, the first writer ascribes the deliverance to the agency of the wind, indicating an unusual but not miraculous occurrence. The second

writer introduces the miraculous division of the waters by Moses' staff, while this is further heightened in the last account, which pictures the piling-up of the waters like a wall at the extension of Moses' hand, and the destruction of *all* of Pharaoh's host. Thus a narrative may become greatly magnified, and the title of a book or chapter does not guarantee that all its contents were written by the author named, especially as these titles often originated at a late date.

3. As one of the principles of a philosophical or semi-philosophical nature, the use of reason may be worthy of mention, as there has been a curious hesitancy to accept this fully. Certain investigations have been avoided as liable to be disturbing. Reason has even been held to be antagonistic to belief. This gave Paine's *Age of Reason* much of its success. Bishop Butler's incontrovertible words ought long since to have been final: "Reason is the only faculty whereby we have to judge of anything, even revelation itself." Yet there has been a tendency to recur to the patristic position—the more unreasonable a proposition, the greater its probability—implied by Tertullian's maxim, *credo quia absurdum est*. Reason must be limited, of course, to its own proper domain. There are also many different kinds of evidence. Mathematical, historical, and religious propositions differ greatly from one another. Reason can also afford to recognize its limitations even within its own sphere. Many things are beyond the range of ordinary comprehension but not unreasonable, as recent discovery and invention abundantly prove.

We live by Faith; but Faith is not the slave  
Of text and legend. Reason's voice and God's,  
Nature's and Duty's, never are at odds.

Our knowledge of God—derived in part, independently of the Bible, from the revelation of himself which he makes to all who have "ears to hear"—is another appropriate criterion. Any theory may be submitted to the test of God's justice or love or mercy. We may reverently raise the old question whether anyone could sin sufficiently for a just God to consign him to literal "everlasting burnings" or "unquenchable fire." This, however, is only one of several modes of approach which must be used to confirm or

correct one another, and that with great caution. Perhaps we cannot always know what absolute justice is; yet it can be no less a thing in God than in ourselves.

Nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me.

The principle of retribution may serve as a similar criterion from the opposite point of view. If, for example, the future life should be a continuance of our present mode of life, with all sensual and bodily gratifications naturally removed, or any form of exclusion from the divine presence, must it not in any case be a sufficient doom? We can only speculate here, but there is value even in tentative solutions that provide a reasonable hypothesis for our own satisfaction.

We must guard against understanding as a mere rule what is intended for a principle. When Jesus said, "If thy brother . . . sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again . . . thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:34), he intended to teach the duty of unlimited forgiveness. But Peter took it as a rule—if he had this in mind when he asked: "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? until seven times?" (Matt. 18:21). He speaks as though he had forgiven someone several times and was doubtful as to his duty if the *eighth* occasion should arise. The reply was: "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." Did Peter yet grasp the principle or would he have doubted whether he ought to have forgiven the *four hundred and ninety-first* time? The distinction is vital. One who tries to live by rule is constantly meeting problems he cannot solve. A young Christian reading the New Testament soon comes to the words, "Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). This he takes as a command to be literally obeyed. But in a few weeks he reads: "If thy brother sin, rebuke him" (Luke 17:3). How much more welcome this is. But a more serious thought follows: these passages contradict each other. Then ensues a season of doubt; and that because statements intended to teach principles were taken as rules. Similarly, although Jesus says, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example"

(John 13:14 f.), this is almost universally ignored as a rule, while the few exceptions are regarded as the pitiable objects of a great delusion. What hopeless confusion, what bodily disfigurements, what social entanglements would result from literally obeying our Lord's precepts. If we plucked out an eye or cut off a hand when these members led us astray; if we gave the rest of our clothing to the thief who had already stolen part; if we gave indiscriminately to every beggar, what kind of a world would we have? But when all this is seen to embody a principle of life to relieve us of anxiety as to bodily needs and material possessions, how comforting and stimulating it becomes.

There is also considerable value even in a "probable" interpretation. As in science, we may at times assume a theory until we can prove its truth or falsity. Such theories, too, though finally abandoned, may be temporarily serviceable. The theory of verbal inspiration safeguarded the text during a critical period. The superiority of the spiritual power to the temporal, which has been called the great fraud of the Middle Ages, did much to preserve the external unity of the church. Erroneous creeds have helped some to maintain a certain fidelity when higher motives might have failed; and mistaken interpretations have sustained an orthodoxy that had temporary value.

Finally, all acceptable principles must be based on induction rather than deduction. We must try to discover what has actually been God's procedure, instead of holding some a-priori theory regarding it. This a-priori reasoning has been far too common. It has been argued that the Bible as the channel of divine revelation must have no imperfection. But there is even stronger reason for arguing the perfection of the world and the race. Our only safe course, therefore, is carefully to examine the Bible itself before propounding a theory. If Genesis has two creation accounts, if events are narrated differently in Kings and Chronicles, if incidents connected with the occupation of Canaan are placed in one book after and in another before Joshua's death, the extent and significance of these variations must be measured, not to fit them into a preconceived theory, but to see what theory they will justify.

In short, the above principles call for the application to the



Bible of the same common-sense methods as to any other literature. A book on grammar is judged mainly by its grammatical accuracy, but should be in harmony with the general knowledge of its day. Similarly the Bible ought to show traces of the scientific status of its own time. It is often claimed that the Bible must agree with science. But with what science? The science of today? That of a thousand years ago? Or that of pre-Christian times? If Genesis agreed with the science of its own day, it could not agree with ours, and vice-versa. Such harmony could exist only at one particular epoch; and, on such a hypothesis, for all other ages the book would be worthless.

The fact is that the Bible has come to us without any divine instructions or authorized interpretation. Being confirmed in the conviction of our fathers that it is the most important record of divine revelation, we may wisely adopt their conclusions as far as they are corroborated, and push on to further results of our own. There is a twofold danger in a transitional period like the present: first, that of passing from one extreme to another; second, that of too inflexible adherence to long cherished views. Even in the face of clear evidence, it was difficult to give up the notion that the earth was flat, as that seemed the biblical view. To adopt the heliocentric theory seemed almost blasphemous for the same reason. But our revised conceptions have been a great gain; and that because we have come nearer to the truth. Every actual advance toward the truth is to be heartily welcomed, however startling it may at first appear; for, if it is sound truth, it is an advance toward freedom and toward God.

## THE LITTLE APOCALYPSE

PROFESSOR BURTON SCOTT EASTON, D.D.  
Western Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.

Every reader of Mark, chap. 13, has noticed that in vss. 5-27 there are two distinct lines of thought, one personal and hortatory (vss. 5-6, 9-13, 21-23) and the other predictive (vss. 7-8, 14-20, 24-27), and that the three predictive sections form a continuous narrative:

(7) When ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled: these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. (8) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines: these things are the beginnings of travail. (14) But when ye see the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains: (15) and let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house: (16) and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloak. (17) But woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days! (18) And pray ye that it be not in the winter. (19) For those days shall be tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of creation which God created until now, and never shall be. (20) And except the Lord had shortened the days, no flesh would have been saved; but for the elect's sake, whom he chose, he shortened the days. (24) But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, (25) and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. (26) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. (27) And then shall he send forth his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

This section so evidently forms a closed whole and is so evidently independent of its context that it may be considered separately, without raising the question of whether or not it ever did exist apart from the context. And to this section the name "Little Apocalypse" or "Synoptic Apocalypse" has become applied, for reasons that are obvious.

To determine the meaning that this apocalypse was meant to convey to its first hearers or readers, the primary question to be asked is, How much of this teaching was new? The uncritical modern reader of the gospels thinks, naturally enough, of this section as containing an unheard-of revelation of the future, but this conception is of course erroneous. The Jews of New Testament times were extremely fond of predictions of the events of the end of the world and a really voluminous literature of such predictions existed. Most of it has been lost but enough has survived to give us a very exact idea of its general nature and the first task of the student of the Little Apocalypse is to compare these other predictions of the same kind. Unfortunately, most of the sources that are still extant are in a form not readily accessible to the ordinary reader, but there are three typical apocalypses within the reach of all, the Books of Daniel and of Revelation and Second Esdras (or Fourth Ezra)<sup>1</sup> of the Apocrypha. And in these three works the student will find enough material to make the Little Apocalypse clearly intelligible.

Beginning with vss. 7-8, it is evident that these verses are directed against an assumption that the appearances of wars is to be an immediate token of the end. That such a conception existed is not a matter of speculation, for it is stated explicitly in IV Ezra 9:1-6, where earthquakes, disquietude of peoples, etc., appear as tokens that "it is the very time, wherein the Most High will visit the world which was made by him." And explicitly again 13:31-32: "One shall think to war against another, city against city, place against place, people against people, and kingdom against kingdom. And it shall be, when these things come to pass, and the signs shall happen which I showed thee before, then shall my Son be revealed"; cf. 5:9; 6:24. Such internecine wars as a sign of the end appear again in Rev. 6:1-4; 9:13-20; 17:16; and in Daniel, the king whose rule is to close with the end sweeps out the close of his life in a series of conquests (11:36-45). With this conception the Little Apocalypse agrees in part, but the warning

<sup>1</sup> Ezra is a Jewish work and is, probably, an almost exact contemporary of Revelation, belonging to about the year 93. Possibly it should be dated somewhat earlier, but in any case it uses traditions which are very much earlier.

"be not troubled, the end is not yet" dissents somewhat from the tradition—"these things have, at any rate, no significance for *you*."

Yet they *are* "the beginning of travail," a period of suffering to be followed by a happy release, with a new figure—the Messiah—in the world. The comparison with birth-pangs was inevitable and is found again in Rev. 12:1-5 of the sufferings of the Judaeo-Christian church before the Christ was born and in IV Ezra 4:40-43. Indeed, to later rabbinical writers "birth-pangs of the Messiah" had become the technical term for the sufferings of the nation and world that should precede the final release and it is at least not impossible that the Little Apocalypse is already familiar with the term and uses it in the technical sense.

"Be not disturbed at the beginning of travail, but when ye see the abomination of desolation, *flee!*" The appearance of this abomination, like that of the wars, is not predicted, but is assumed as known, so that an expectation of a force of the most intense evil as a sign of the end must have been widespread. So it appears in IV Ezra. The end of the times is to come through the reign of four beasts (11:39-40), of which the last, the eagle, is to be the worst, and with whose reign the ages of the Most High are fulfilled (11:43), whose coming is to mark the end of the world (14:18). And the end of the world is to come through Esau (6:9). I.e., before the rule of God begins, hostility to God is to reach a climax, and "Ezra" appeals for confirmation of his teaching to the predictions of Daniel (12:11). The parallel with the Little Apocalypse is perfect and it is clear that the prophecies of Daniel had produced a vivid effect on the Jews of New Testament times, convincing them (or securing them in a conviction already reached) that a cataclysmic outburst of diabolic malevolence was at hand (cf. Rev. 12:12). The form it is to take, however, is not specified by the Little Apocalypse. A curious breach of agreement in Mark 13:14, however, points to the conception of something personal "standing where *he* ought not" ("abomination" is neuter, "standing" is masculine). And an early Christian tradition of a personal incorporation of evil is set forth categorically in the Lawless One, the Man of Sin of II Thess. 2:3-12, "who exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped" and reappears in the

Antichrist of I John 2:18-22 (not the less personal because *interpreted* to refer to a number of human beings). So in the "false prophet" of Rev. 19:20, battling against the Lamb and overcome by him. So in IV Ezra he is Esau and the eagle. Yet this personal form must not be stressed too far. Not only does I John translate the Antichrist into "many heretics" without apology or explanation. The "false prophet" of Rev. is in 13:11-17 a perfectly transparent figure for the Asiatic priesthood devoted to the emperor-cult and the eagle of IV Ezra, like Esau, is simply the Roman rule. Nor is there anything in the passages in Daniel (8:13-14; 9:27; 11:31; 12:12) that compel the reader to think of a definite person. Something *personified* will evidently answer the purpose quite as well and may be intended in the Little Apocalypse with as much probability as a person. Only in II Thess., chap. 2, does a person seem required, and even there it may be questioned if Paul laid much stress on this point.

"Standing where he ought not." Here neither Daniel nor Paul leaves any doubt as to the meaning. The "little horn" casts down the place of the sanctuary and takes away the continual burnt offering (Dan. 8:11; 11:31; 12:11) and sets up the abomination in place thereof. The Man of Sin sits in the temple of God (II Thess. 2:4). For Revelation and IV Ezra, writing after the destruction of the temple, this point of view was naturally impossible, but even IV Ezra does not think it necessary to modify the statement of one of his sources which placed the final conflict at Mount Zion (13:34-35; cf. Ezek., chaps. 38-39; Zech. 12:9; 14:2). Consequently, with the information at our disposal, "the abomination of desolation standing where he ought not" should be interpreted as "the supreme manifestation of evil invading the temple-sanctuary."<sup>2</sup>

One thing, however, is very certain. The author of the Little Apocalypse, especially if the author was Jesus himself, knew what he meant by the terms and presupposed that the readers would know what was meant by the terms. For the abomination is mentioned for a practical end—"it will be nothing that can be resisted

<sup>2</sup> The attempts of Caligula in 39-41 to have a statue of himself erected in the Temple must have stimulated the attention paid to these prophecies of Daniel—if such stimulus was needed.

—flee!” And such a warning would be entirely pointless if nothing recognizable were meant or conveyed. It is altogether probable that a *human* power was meant, as flight is thought of as bringing safety. Perhaps it is not quite impossible that diabolic power was conceived to be terminated by the “mountains,” but the other alternative is vastly more likely. If human power is meant, it is almost certainly the power of Rome that is to be recognized here, as one hardly need argue. “Roman forces in the temple” would be natural, especially when one remembers the morbid dread of temple-desecration by the Romans that had obsessed the minds of the Jews ever since Pompey’s visit to the Holy of Holies. Allowance, however, must be made for the appearance of temporary traditions and it is not possible to deny real plausibility to the interpretation of “where he ought not” as the Holy Land. Those keen enough to foresee the inevitable war and its inevitable consequences might well have looked forward to the moment of the Roman armies’ crossing the boundary as the beginning of the end of all things.

Tribulation will follow, of an unheard-of kind. This prediction is of all features of apocalypses the most stereotyped. Revelation contains three complete cycles of such tribulations (seals, trumpets, and bowls), besides all manner of plagues outside of the cycles. IV Ezra contains four cycles (5:1-12; 6:18-25; 9:1-6; 13:29-34), with many other references. And Mark 13:19 is a virtual quotation of Dan. 12:1b, changed only to make the whole world and not merely Israel affected by the tribulation. (As in every apocalypse of New Testament times, the local interest in Palestine has been widened out to include the universe.) The time of this tribulation, however, has been “shortened.” Daniel (7:25; 9:27; 12:7) had prophesied three and a half years as the duration of the tribulation and that this time had been remembered is seen by its reappearance in Rev 11:3; 13:5.<sup>3</sup> Hence by the shortening of the time is to be understood a period less than the time set in Daniel. A similar shortening of the times seems to be the thought in IV Ezra 4:26b (although explicitly denied in 4:37) but a clear statement occurs

<sup>3</sup> It is found also in later Jewish sources.

in the Syriac Baruch<sup>4</sup> apocalypse (20:1-2): "For see, days come when the times will pass more quickly than they did of old and the seasons run more quickly than those that are past and the years pass away more quickly than do those of the present. For this reason I have rejected Zion, that I may punish the world as speedily as may be." The Little Apocalypse, however, seems to be unique in the motive assigned "for the sake of the elect—otherwise no flesh would be saved." The imagery of the last phrase is that only those left alive at the end will enter into the kingdom, the doctrine of the resurrection being ignored implicitly. The same concept is developed at length in IV Ezra 13:16-20—those that die before the end shall escape great peril, but they shall pass away as a cloud out of the world and shall not see the things that shall happen (cf. 6:25; 7:27). (The same conception has shaped the wording of Mark 13:13b.)

In those shortened days, a general catastrophe of nature will take place and the Son of man shall come in clouds. It is probably familiar to all today that the Jews of New Testament times conceived of the Messiah as a heavenly being almost as frequently as they conceived of him as a Davidic king. Both conceptions are found in IV Ezra, the latter in 12:5 (if the longer reading is original), the former in 7:28 ("Jesus" here is a Christian interpolation) and in chap. 13. Particularly significant are 13:2, "that man flew with the clouds of heaven," and 13:12, "I beheld the same man . . . call unto him another multitude which was peaceable." The "gathering of the elect" of Mark 13:27 rests in phraseology (at any rate) on the conception of the return of the Jewish dispersion from the ends of the earth (IV Ezra 3:39-50).

The question asked at the beginning of this study can now be answered: The imagery of the Little Apocalypse contains nothing novel. It is simply a brief allusive summary of the ordinary scheme of the last things that was held by a great number of the Jews of the

<sup>4</sup> The Apocalypse of Baruch belongs in the period 70-95 A.D. Between it and Ezra literary relations exist that are not very clear but Baruch seems to be the older of the two. As it is preserved in a Syriac translation it is generally quoted as "Syriac Baruch" to distinguish it from a much later work that is preserved in the Greek. Neither has anything to do with the Baruch of the Apocrypha.

same day, with no added details, except the warnings of vss. 7, 15-16. It is very much as if the Apocalypse had said, "The events of the end will be those you have always expected. Two warnings alone need be given you. Pay no attention to the preliminary wars, and when the abomination is revealed, seek instant flight!" Evidently it was for the sake of these warnings alone that the section was composed and it is on these warnings that interpretation must rest.

That the Jews of Palestine in New Testament times were living in a state of eschatological tension is a familiar fact and equally familiar is the fact that it was this hope of immediate divine intervention that encouraged the people in the perfectly hopeless resistance to Rome. The end was at hand, the wars and rumors of wars were the preliminary tokens, the patriot might run to arms in the faith that God would come to aid. Yes, even though the Holy Land was invaded and the holy city besieged—all of this had been foretold. Even though the abomination of desolation had appeared, his rule could not last long. The days were shortened and sturdy resistance to the end would be rewarded with preservation to see the blissful things that should follow!

Placed against the background of this point of view, the meaning of the Little Apocalypse is entirely obvious. The connection of the approaching war with the end is not denied but is assumed as it doubtless was assumed by almost every Jew of the period. The lesson drawn from the fact, however, is different. The approach of the war is not to lead to a sharpening of swords—it is to be regarded with indifference. The appearance of the abomination is not to be withstood manfully—it is to be fled without ceremony and without apology. In plain terms, the Little Apocalypse is simply a warning to its recipients to keep out of the approaching Roman war and everything connected with it. The eschatological imagery, though meant to have its full meaning, is really secondary.

Historically, it was this attitude that the Christians of Palestine adopted, as is related by Eusebius (III, 5) and only less explicitly by the author of Revelation (12:6, 14-16). However faithful Jewish Christians may have been to the national traditions, they



entertained no delusions as to the sanctity of the city, "which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified" (Rev. 11:8), and which had been guilty of the even worse crime of refusal to repent and be converted after a generation of opportunity. It was true that the desecration of Jerusalem would mean the end of the world, but the Christian felt no vocation to help withstand the ruin. The city deserved all that could come upon it and all that man could do was to stand aside and wait quietly for the end.

Still, it is not legitimate to explain the "tribulation" of Mark 13:19 simply as a historical reference to the siege and fall of Jerusalem. The events of that siege were terrible, after every allowance has been made for the gross exaggerations of Josephus, but even if they had been as horrible as his descriptions they would be far short of "tribulation, such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now." No sufferings of a single city, even if that city was Jerusalem, satisfy the conditions of this verse which demand a tribulation as universal as the end of vs. 27 is universal. The sufferings of Jerusalem may have been thought of as the beginning of the tribulation, but they certainly do not exhaust it. The "elect" are conceived to have taken advantage of the warning and to have fled. Yet even their flight would not have saved them, had not the Lord "shortened the days." An attempt to apply this "shortening of the days" to the siege of Jerusalem or the sufferings of Palestine is its own refutation.

Still less legitimate is it, of course, to separate the tribulation from the end and to treat the two as entirely distinct events, unrelated in time. One still reads occasionally in commentaries that two predictions are made here, one of the destruction of Jerusalem within the lifetime of the disciples, and one of the end of the world, at some unfixed time. As a matter of fact, both are in the same "days"—and "shortened days" at that, and no exegetical device can admit of the insertion of some two thousand years in the middle of vs. 24. The expectation of the Little Apocalypse is the same as the expectation of Mark 9:1 or 14:62—of a Parousia within a comparatively short time—and the Little Apocalypse differs from

the other two passages only in that the discussion of preliminary signs is fuller. Religious difficulty that is felt through the non-fulfilment of these promises is a matter for the theologian, not the exegete, to relieve, whether by a simple appeal to a kenotic doctrine, a just reference to the fact that no biblical prophecy is to be treated as "history written in advance," or (most biblical of all) to the argument of Romans, chap. 11.

Finally, can this apocalypse—or its teaching—be referred to Jesus? The answer to this will depend largely on considerations outside the section itself. If a critical examination of the Synoptic Gospels has led to the conclusion that he did not expect his exaltation to celestial messiahship, the question is of course answered negatively. If, however, the contrary position is held, the question is not so simple. Most important is the fact that elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels great stress is laid on the absence of preliminary signs of the Parousia (Luke 17:26-30; Mark 14:35-36; Matt. 25:13, etc.), while the Little Apocalypse emphasizes the final tribulation. Still, even this is perhaps not entirely conclusive, as the final desolation seems to be part of the end itself, rather than a preliminary sign. The use, moreover, of stereotyped categories of the day to which is attached a practical direction that bears the real weight of the discussion cannot be said to be out of the manner of Jesus, and even about the year 30 the approach of the war with Rome must have seemed clear enough to make it a subject for practical guidance. The restriction of the audience in Mark to "Peter, James, John, and Andrew," is suspicious, and this restriction seems paralleled with remarkable exactness by the words of Eusebius (III, 5), "a revelation vouchsafed to approved men there [in Jerusalem] before the war, to leave the city." From this many scholars have deduced that this "revelation" of Eusebius is really the Little Apocalypse, which was circulated before the war as an esoteric instruction. To be sure, the force of the parallel is broken by the next words in Eusebius, "and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella," while even without this the argument is not conclusive. But in any case, the reader must form his own opinion—the present writer believing that the case for a later origin is "not proved."

## Book Reviews

### CHRISTIAN THOUGHT TO THE REFORMATION

To write the history of Christian theology from its beginnings to the Reformation within the limits of a book of two hundred and fifty pages is what few scholars would care to attempt and fewer could expect to accomplish with success. It has been done, however, by Principal Workman.<sup>1</sup> It was inevitable, of course, that such a work should suffer in places from overcondensation and that the story should become a description from without of the combination and fusion of influences that produced successive precipitations of doctrinal deposits, rather than a development from within of forces immanent in the spiritual life of the times concerned; and yet, both the lay reader, to whom time forbids more than a general knowledge of the course of thought, and the expert student, whose devotion to details often prevents him from "seeing the wood for the trees," will find in this work an admirable summary and excellent guide.

In "The Jewish Factors," "The Influence of Hellas," [discussions of] "The Person of Christ," and "The Genius of Rome" are described the influences formative of the main trunk of doctrinal tradition. The Jew contributed the forms of the Old Testament, the Greek his philosophy, and the Roman his polity. There ought to have been more explicit reference to the original Christian deposit. Apocalypsism, legalism, and allegorism (rightly regarded by Workman as a form of rationalism) came in early as interpretative tendencies even in Judaism. The Greek brought in syncretism, insistence on strict "definition, even of the undefinable" (p. 26), "sovereign efficacy of reason" (p. 27) and the idea of deification. The so-called heresies were inevitable. An admirable statement of Gnosticism is given in brief. The account of the controversies touching the person of Christ smacks too much of an apology for Nicene theology. The statement that "from the first His deity was viewed as a simple historic fact, which scarcely called for explanation" (p. 65) is misleading.

Rome gave to theology a legalistic stamp, which is seen in a forensic view of atonement and in the formal use of a canon of Scripture. The

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Thought to the Reformation*. By Herbert B. Workman. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. x+256. 75 cents.

center of gravity shifted from the incarnation to the death of Christ (p. 94). "The worst outcome of the Latin spirit" was the mediaeval inquisition (p. 109). One feels that in his discussion of mediaeval theology Workman gives too little attention to Augustine, notwithstanding that he is designated "the greatest of Christian philosophers" (p. 126), and depends too much on quotations from other historians.

For mediaeval church-thought the significance of Gregory the Great (the author continues the bad custom of prefacing the title "St." to such names), who stands at the entrance to the Dark Ages, is rightly emphasized. Mediaeval theology was "administrative" (p. 130); hence its unity, or rather insistence on uniformity. Yet there was always some room allowed for individual opinion.

An important chapter is "The Renaissance of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries." The leadership in thought was transferred in those times from the cloister to the secular universities. Abelard receives unusual honor. Workman considers that it was he who led this revolution. Scholasticism rose to meet the issue and sought to build on the basis of formal logic and mystical insight. Great mystics, like Bernard and Eckhart, have an attraction for our author, who contends that while "there is in mysticism a certain timelessness which is the despair of the historian," there is progress in it nevertheless. While the dangers of pantheism and hallucination were not escaped, in such works as the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis the Reformation was already introduced.

Thirty pages are assigned to "The Schoolmen." The treatment here is necessarily cramped, though one could not ask for more than is given in such a short space. In reading this chapter one feels more than ever that the editors made a mistake in not dividing the long period of fifteen hundred years between two volumes.

GEORGE CROSS

NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION  
NEWTON CENTRE, MASS.

---

#### THE THEOLOGY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHICAL IDEALISTS

If anyone thinks that interest in religious problems is dying out, he would do well to read two recent volumes by modern philosophers<sup>1</sup> whose sole reason for treating religious subjects is the conviction that

<sup>1</sup> *The Truth of Religion*. By Rudolf Eucken. Translated by W. Tudor Jones. New York: Putnam, 1911. Pp. xiv+622. \$3.50.

*The Sources of Religious Insight*. By Josiah Royce. (The Bross Lectures for 1911.) New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. xvi+297. \$1.25, net.

here, after all, the ultimate questions of human experience find their inevitable formulation. Professor Eucken's book appeared in German in 1901, but has now been translated into English. The views of Professor Royce are not essentially different from those which found expression in his Gifford Lectures on "The World and the Individual." Thus, although these two volumes are not the bearers of novelties, they do nevertheless represent a deepening interest in religious problems on the part of the distinguished authors; and their publication is evidence of the readiness of thoughtful men to listen to this newer exposition of the meaning of religion.

These philosophers are idealists. That means that for them the primary reality is to be found in our human experience. External existence is secondary rather than primary. We must start with the certainly known contents of our consciousness, and must then explore the "outer" world from this base of supplies. This position exactly reverses the traditional attitude of theology, which has first sought to validate an objective revelation from which we may draw assurance of the existence of God and the reality of our salvation. The idealist, on the contrary, must discover God as a correlative of human experience. The study of religion, therefore, takes the form of an analysis of our experience in order to discover whether the affirmation of God's existence is necessarily implied.

We can here only hint briefly at the outcome of this analysis. Professor Eucken, while sharing the idealistic point of view with Professor Royce, is nevertheless supremely dissatisfied with a purely monistic interpretation of the universe. He preserves something of the mediaeval Christian's sensitiveness to the unspiritual character of the "natural" world. If we yield ourselves to the solicitations of the senses and of mere scientific prudence, we find the world robbing us of our inner independence, making us mere insignificant links in the endless chain of cosmic happenings. The problem of religion is to conquer an independent spiritual life. With the fervor of a prophet (and, it must be confessed, with an exuberance of pictorial rhetorical phraseology which leaves the reader frequently wondering what it is all about) Eucken depicts the incessant struggle of the soul to affirm its true dignity. "In spiritual things every pathway of man leads to a Yea through a Nay, and all toil is vain without an inner elevation through the energy of an Absolute Life." The outcome of his analysis is the conviction that through the struggle to affirm our spiritual selves we actually come into the experience of a Reality not ourselves which bears us up and carries

to completion the spiritual achievements for which our "petty-human" endeavors would be entirely inadequate. Eucken calls this reinforcing power the "Absolute Spiritual Life" (*Geistesleben*); and after having affirmed its reality he iterates and reiterates its activities in terms appropriate to a Cosmic self-conscious Being. Still, his critical idealism prevents him from conceiving God in the self-dependent fashion of the older theologies. Religious beliefs are grounded not so much in the revelation of a transcendent God as in the practical outcome of human spiritual striving. Thus Eucken's exposition lacks the clearness of an out-and-out theology, and it also lacks the exactness of a critically psychological analysis. Stimulating and immensely invigorating it is; but the present reviewer must confess his inability to understand the precise meaning of much of the exuberant rhetoric, or to feel confident that he knows just the pathway along which the struggle may be conducted to so triumphant a discovery of that "Absolute Spiritual Life" which is apparently at the same time created by human struggle and yet discovered as prior to it.

Professor Royce avoids the strenuous mysticism of Eucken by a calm rationalism which leads the reader from the contemplation of apparently harmless aspects of commonplace events to the conclusion that in every limited experience there is involved the implicit assumption of a Whole into which that experience fits. But the mere conception of such a Whole implies a rational order lying above the realm of human creation, and therefore demanding an Absolute Intelligence to constitute it a Whole. The argument starts from the universally felt need of salvation, which Professor Royce defines as the conviction "that there is some end or aim of human life which is more important than all other aims," and the fear "that man as he now is, or as he naturally is, is in great danger of so missing this highest aim as to render his whole life a senseless failure." Religious insight means such an apprehension of the way to attain the highest aim as shall save us from failure. Our individual insight is indeed enlarged and deepened by the social consciousness. But mere humanism cannot satisfy the soul in its quest. Every partial knowledge implies the possibility of a perfect knowledge. Thus we are eventually led to the affirmation of the Absolute, as the Supreme Superhuman Consciousness in control of the universe, and as the indispensable ground of any sort of real meaning to experience at all. Eucken obtains religious assurance through the stress and storm of persistent struggle against seemingly hopeless difficulties, only to be rewarded at last by the inexplicable presence of the "Absolute Spiritual

Life." Royce, on the contrary, would by a process of quiet reasoning eradicate all cause for distressing doubt by bringing us to a belief in the existence of an Absolute who so controls the universe that we may from the first be sure of a victorious triumph of the Good.

The task of this idealistic theology is very different from that of traditional theology. It is no longer a question of defending the authenticity of external sources of information. The crucial problem is whether human experience can reach out to a superhuman reality so surely and effectively that the age-old religious confidence in a transcendent Providence may be maintained. Theologians should be grateful to these philosophers for their clear apprehension of this fundamental problem of modern theology, and for their courageous attempts to contribute a real solution to the problem, even if the "Absolute" which they affirm appears somewhat like an abstract noun.

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## New Literature

The most important books listed in these columns will receive notice in the book-review pages.

### NEW TESTAMENT

#### ARTICLES

BURTON, ERNEST D. Some Phases of the Synoptic Problem. Presidential Address, 1911. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XXXI, 95-113.

In a closely wrought treatment of some phases of the synoptic problem, Professor Burton contends that the present "concentration of attention upon Mark and Q as the principal sources of Matthew and Luke . . . is scarcely justified by the facts," and the two-document hypothesis "should give way to the multiple-document hypothesis"; that "it is more probable that Matthew had a peculiar source for the teaching of Jesus than that the teachings peculiar to his gospels were either in the common sources of Matthew and Luke" or existed detached; and that the non-Markan material common to Matthew and Luke was more probably known to Matthew at least, in two documents than in one.

CASTOR, GEORGE DEWITT. The Relation of Mark to the Source Q. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-91.

Against Mr. B. H. Streeter's recent contention (*Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem*) that Mark shows the influence of the non-Markan source of Matthew and Luke (the so-called Q) Mr. Castor points out that in places where Mark and Q overlap their accounts show a deep-seated difference, and that in no instance is their resemblance close enough to imply documentary relationship.

### RELATED SUBJECTS

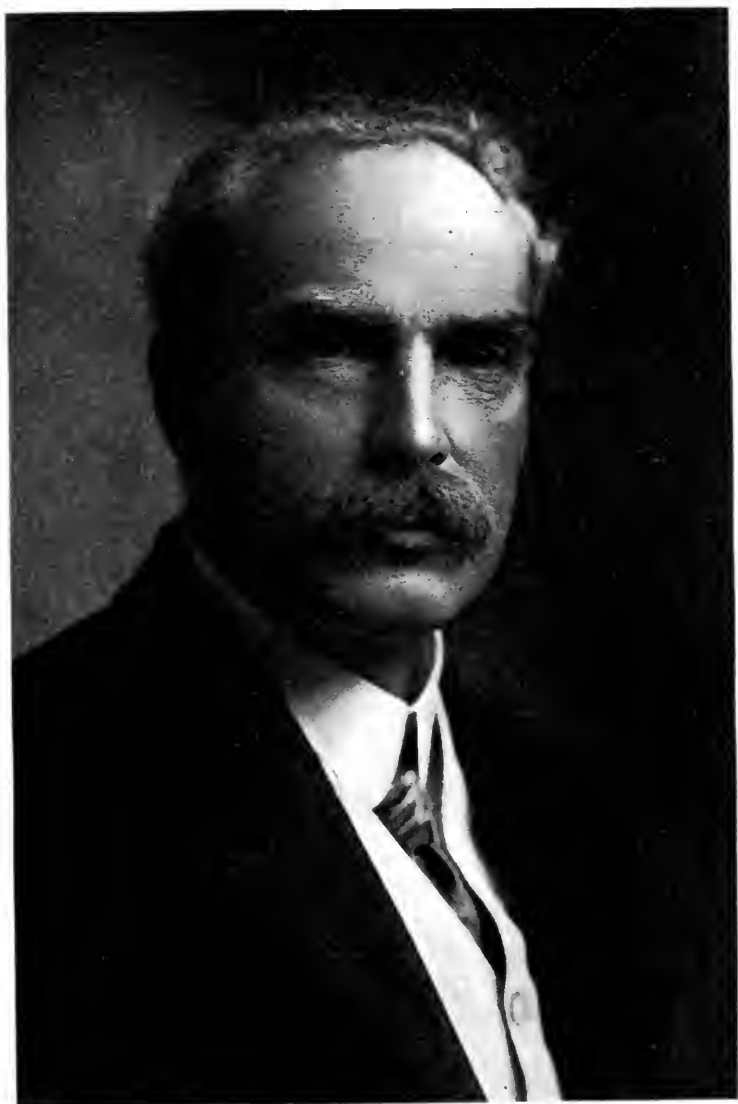
#### BOOKS

Periodical Articles on Religion 1890-1899. Compiled and edited by ERNEST CUSHING RICHARDSON. With the co-operation of CHARLES S. THAYER, WILLIAM C. HAWKS, PAUL MARTIN, and various members of the faculty of the Hartford Theological Seminary, and some help from A. D. SAVAGE, SOLON LIBRESCOT, and many others. Author Index. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. 876.

Professor Richardson and his collaborators have supplemented their monumental Subject Index of periodical articles on religion, 1890-99, with an author index to the same. The great value and convenience of such an index is manifest. More than 56,000 titles are included of articles relating to religion which appeared in 1890-99. It was inevitable that there should be some omissions and inconsistencies. It seems especially strange that no list of the abbreviations used accompanies the volume and some may question the wisdom of a method, the very elaborateness of which seems to forbid its regular continuation. Yet for the period Professor Richardson undertakes to cover he has provided in this and the accompanying index valuable reference books for students of English, American, and continental periodical literature on religion.







PROFESSOR BENJAMIN WISNER BACON, D.D.

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XL

SEPTEMBER, 1912

NUMBER 3

## Editorial

### THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

The church has generally felt that its business was with individuals. It has undertaken to bring men, women, and children, one by one, to Christ, that they might share his life. Then the church has said to them, Go out into all your human relations and live the Christ life. It has expected that society would be affected by the regenerated individuals. The church has very naturally had this idea, because whenever one considers the conditions of any individual soul, it is clear that his religious needs are very personal. There is a great deal of sin that is so intensely personal that the attention of the church has been inevitably fixed upon it. Here are all the sins that arise out of human passion: anger, hatred, malice, envy, jealousy, every unkindness, intemperance, and that darkest, deadliest passion, which strikes at the citadel of human life. Humanity is guilty in these things, and the misery and shame of them are everywhere. Men recognize the evil, and in their better moments long to be delivered, and to be worthy. And the heart of man knows that there is a God, whose eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. So the church has called upon them to repent of their sins, and has used her persuasion that men should be convicted of their sins, and has given them God's gracious message: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Of course, this has always been a personal message.

Yet the world will never be saved by the salvation of individuals, simply because the greatest of its sins are not individual sins at all. The wicked cannot forsake his way, because many of his wicked ways are not his to forsake. The worst sins of which each of us is guilty he cannot abandon, and it is not because of moral weakness, it is because they are the sins of other people as well. We shall have to forsake them together. The most atrocious outbreaking wickednesses of our land cannot be forsaken by individuals; we shall have to forsake them together.

As individuals we are kind and just, as a society we are heartless and tyrannical. Our whole pitiless competitive wage system is crushing men, women, and children, and nobody is to blame. It is nobody's business that with our wonderful prosperity half the population lives below the standard of decent requirements.

The business of the modern church is with these matters that are nobody's else business. If there is an evil for which there is nobody to blame, it is clear that it is an evil for which everyone is to blame. That is a matter for the church to consider most earnestly. Our God, whom we worship, is on the side of humanity. Our gospel, in which we put our trust, is a gospel for the salvation of the world. If womanhood is crying to us with an exceeding great and bitter cry, we do not dare to drown that cry with our anthems of praise. We must heed it and find out what it means. And it is not hard to find out what it means. It simply is that we have an ungodly and inhuman political economy. We have learned with fine scientific precision to estimate the cost of the products of our industries, but we have failed to take into consideration the human cost. We measure the wear and tear on buildings and machinery, but we have stupidly failed to put down in our expenses the cost in blood, and tears, and virtue, and hope. We understand cash values, but we ignore the human values, soberness, chastity, childhood, womanhood, manhood, the American home, joy and courage in life and work. No one is to blame for this monstrous travesty upon Christian civilization. It has all come in spite of us. Therefore, that is the business of the church. We must see the essential selfishness of the industrial conditions in which we live, and upon which many of us thrive.

We must feel deeply and bitterly the shame of it. We must make it the matter of our cry to God for light and leading. We must have no peace until the evils are ended, and a Christian brotherhood has become a possibility.

This does not mean that we are to turn our churches into sociological seminaries. It does not mean that we are to expect our preachers to give us programs of social reform. The pulpit is not to substitute a new economics for the old gospel. In fact, it is not the business of the church to solve the problems of society at all. The duty of the church is far simpler than that. Indeed, the church perfectly well understands the procedure which it is her duty to follow. She has faithfully pursued it since Jesus gave her the commission. She has always realized that she was to lead men to the conviction of sin, to repentance and faith, and to a practical expression of that faith in life. The only readjustment demanded of the church is that she appreciate the real nature of sin in the modern world, namely, that it is social as well as personal.

We must come to a conviction of sin upon these tragic evils that are nobody's fault individually, but are our common responsibility collectively. Our prayers and preaching must help us to feel the burden. The church has an opportunity unparalleled in its history to call upon men with passion and with power to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. When the report of the Vice Commission was made public, it was read by a quiet Christian scholar, who said: "I ought not to be teaching in a college; I ought to be killing somebody." He was under deep conviction. We must investigate and find our facts, until the sorrow of our social sins weighs so heavily upon us that we shall have no rest until it be lifted.

Such godly sorrow will produce repentance. We are not repentant at present in any deep sense. Now and then we are a little concerned; so men have always been a little concerned about their sins. But the old evangelical idea about repentance was a more thoroughgoing matter. And it was right. We have not repented of the common sins of our society until we have determined to forsake them, and have cried to God for the power of his spirit to help us. The individual repentance meant a passionate marshaling of all the forces of the soul, that a man might turn away from

evil unto God. Our social repentance must mean that everything else shall seem small in comparison, every difficulty insignificant, every cost only paltry, that the destroying crimes of our society may be abandoned.

So we shall need faith. The old evangel was right when it preached faith in God for salvation. We must confidently look for a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. We must believe that the Lord God Almighty is on our side. The weakness of the church today is her practical atheism, her skepticism. If we dare to say that only a society is possible in which men are ground to powder under the wheels of industry, and womanhood loses her purity and high ministries, and childhood is cursed and stunted, then let us frankly recognize that we do not believe in God, that we consider the salvation of Jesus Christ to be a mockery, and that we abandon faith in the presence of the divine spirit in this human world. The issue before the modern church is clear. She must have a social gospel or give up her faith in God and Christ, and in the power divine in human life.

The old evangel always cheered men's faith by pointing to the spiritual victories that faith had wrought. The church may point to them today. Wherever earnest men have set themselves to heal the wounds of our society, the divine grace has been revealed, and goodness has come. Even that age-long social evil, whose grip has been on every civilization that the world has known, whose insidious influence lays hold upon the boys and girls of our poorer classes, and more and more upon the boys and girls of our protected classes, whose organized power is corrupting all our American city governments, whose character, so tragic and so pathetic, is the darkest blot upon our Christian society—even this is being vanquished. As a definite result of the arousing of public sentiment in Chicago during the last three years, there has been convicted and sent to jail on an average of one person per week for complicity in the traffic in womanhood, and the traffic has sensibly diminished in that time. Some of the men and women who know most about the facts, and who are our representatives in this task, express their confident hope that this century may be known in history as the time when this dark blot was removed from human life.

There are signs enough to cheer us on. The industrial struggle looks very dark. We often cry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But wherever Christian men have tried to find the light they have found it. We do not dare to despair. We are laborers together with God, and there is nothing too hard to accomplish with him.

The issue of faith is work. The church has always preached that man should believe and then work. So we must say today—repent, believe, and go to work to make the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. In response to that appeal of the church the Christian men and women shall right our social wrongs and bring us true social health. No one will think of failure. None will dream though right is worsted, wrong will triumph. Commissions, investigations, classes for patient study, reform organizations—a thousand efforts will be inaugurated and championed by enthusiastic Christian men and women, determined to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance.

With such a social message the church will speak to the needs of the individual human heart with added power. We need not wait till all society is regenerate before we preach the evangel that a broken heart may be healed, that a sinner may come home to God, that any willing soul may find peace and power. We shall keep the old gospel with all its stirring summons and winning appeal, and it will only mean the more as we add to it the older gospel of Jesus and the apostles and the prophets, that the kingdom of God is coming in the earth.

## CHRISTIANITY AND THE HOPE OF SOCIAL REDEMPTION

PROFESSOR SAMUEL DICKEY  
McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago

Religion and hope are inseparable. The man who is without God is without hope, and he who is without hope is also, we may be sure, "without God in the world." Every sacrifice, every prayer, every religious aspiration has been the expression of a hope for better things. Faith and Hope are twin sisters, and one is not born without the other in human hearts.

Christianity is the religion of hope. Through all the ages, she has rescued the fallen, encouraged the desperate, consoled the afflicted, comforted and inspired the dying—yet she has done so largely through but one phase of her hope—that which concerns the individual. Her hope for the race, for mankind, Christianity for the most part forgot. Man Christianity had to rediscover in the days of the Renaissance, humanity she is only rediscovering today.

It is most surprising, however, that Christianity's hope was originally social rather than individual.

Its beginnings go back to the days of the Hebrew prophets. Then, it has been well said, "the very subject of the Hebrew religion was the nation, not the individual."<sup>1</sup> Israel was Jehovah's chosen, not the individual Israelite. The latter had a part in the promises only as a member of the nation as a whole. Israel's government, her laws, her national institutions were the outward expressions of Jehovah's will. It is this we mean when we say her form of government was a theocracy. It was not simply that the Hebrews had a state religion, in a sense their religion was their state and their state their religion.

In consequence of this, the morality the prophets insist on particularly is not private but public. The sins they denounce

<sup>1</sup> v. Dobschütz, *Eschatology of the Gospels*, p. 65.



are not so much those of personal and private life as those of the nation, of its rulers and social classes. The conscience they strive to awaken is the community's conscience, not the individuals', and the forgiveness they promise to repentance is the forgiveness of the nation as a whole.

But we are concerned especially with the prophets' hopes for the future. These centered in a kingdom which is always coming but never here. It is no picture of a transcendent heaven, no beatific choir of spirits redeemed, which they describe. On the contrary, it is a reign of Jehovah on earth. Jerusalem is its capital, the nation or a remnant are its subjects, while alien nations share its blessings, for Israel is to bear a priestly mission, and be a light to the Gentiles and a bringer of salvation to all the earth.

The idea of the kingdom is more prominent in the Old Testament than that of the messianic king. The earlier prophets pay scarcely any attention to the latter. We do great injustice to messianic prophecy when we conceive of it simply as a series of predictions concerning the Christ. These are but an incident. The content of the prophetic hope is the messianic kingdom rather than the messianic king.

And this content is at once religious and social. It varies in many details, but not in these fundamental aspects. It is an ever-developing ideal in which Israel, and the other nations through Israel, are to enjoy the beneficent reign of Jehovah himself, a reign in which righteousness, justice, and peace shall characterize all the relations of men—a religious and ethical utopia which has no parallel among the literatures of the world.

In the years of the intertestamental period a great change came over the religious ideas of the Jews. Their conceptions of God became more and more transcendent so that he became superior to, and almost wholly separated from, the world. Through the influence of Persian dualism and angelology, this world came to be regarded as largely given over to the powers of evil—the great battlefield of armies of good and bad angels, who strove for the possession of mankind. Through a wider acquaintance with the great world-powers and bitter experiences of their persecutions,

the Jews came to despair of the betterment of their national condition and the realization of their prophetic hopes, save through the miraculous intervention of Jehovah. From co-operation in this realization, therefore, they gradually excluded man and his efforts almost entirely. The consummation was to come solely by the supernatural intervention of God, through a great cataclysm, or universal upheaval, which should bring to an end the old order, and usher in the new. Consequently they divided history into two distinct ages: the present, concerning which they were utterly pessimistic—indeed it was destined to grow worse and worse until the very end—and the future, or coming age, which was to be correspondingly perfect, and in which the faithful Jews were to enjoy the most fantastic and material joys, while the wicked underwent the extremest sort of tortures.

These conceptions find expression in the so-called Apocalypses, or Revelations, of which sixteen or more are preserved to us in whole or in part. They are books which explain in the form of visions and under grotesque symbols, perhaps largely Babylonian in origin, the various events which are to signalize the "last times," and offer bases for the calculation of when the long-expected transformation shall occur.

In certain respects this apocalyptic movement is an advance on the older prophecy, but as a whole it must be emphatically regarded as a deterioration. As it has been suggestively put,<sup>2</sup> "Apocalyptic bears the same relation to prophecy as Rabbinism bears to the Mosaic Law." In other words, it is derivative and interpretative. It is necessary to remember that it arose in a degenerate age. The Greek and oriental worlds were both in their decadence, and the lower, more brutal, and material elements of man's nature were in the ascendancy. The period was religiously unproductive for the Jew—to make up for his lack, he borrowed from his Babylonian, Persian, and Greek neighbors, and worked over and over again his own inheritance from the past.

We must not be surprised, therefore, to learn that the social hope suffered in this period a distinct eclipse.

In the first place, the hope becomes more "other-worldly"—

<sup>2</sup> E. F. Scott, *The Kingdom and the Messiah*, p. 11.

the older prophetic forms of Israel's hope had concerned themselves largely with the land, the nation, its rulers and kings. Now the expectation takes on superhuman forms—the forces and activities become unearthly and transcendent, transformations occur in the heavens and earth, strange unearthly beasts and figures appear, great battles are fought, and slaughters of angels and men ensue, and the whole gets out of relation with the present, and is transferred to a world beyond.

In the second place, an intense pessimism comes to dominate the estimate of the present social world. Being separated from God and under the control of demons, improvement is hopeless. All is destined to grow worse until the appointed time, and all efforts for social amendment are, therefore, futile.

Thirdly, we can see that with the growth of the conceptions of resurrection and individual immortality (which are distinct advances over the prophetic period) there is unfortunately a corresponding loss in the social aspects of the hope, and the latter often degenerate into little more than the individual reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked.

Finally, the whole conception becomes artificial and mechanical. The forms and symbols, which were originally intended to make more vivid and concrete the messianic hope, in reality render it more remote and intangible. The wild figures, originally perhaps political symbols, in time obscure the thought and come to be regarded as entities in themselves. All becomes a part of a hard-and-fast system—a scheme or program of the ages, whose value and interest is intellectual and chronological rather than moral and religious.

Under these tendencies the social elements of the Jewish hope evaporate. What were left were intensely national and meant little more than the triumph of Israel over her enemies. Truly the Jewish hope of social redemption fell on hard times when it passed from the prophetic into the apocalyptic period.

But fortunately the story does not end here. Toward the close of this very period Jesus of Nazareth appears. To him the hope of social redemption owes more than to all his predecessors put together.

Yet we must not begin with a misunderstanding. Jesus was not a social reformer. It is a very superficial estimate which calls him "the first Socialist," "the good Sansculotte." His interest was religious rather than social or economical. It has been well said:<sup>3</sup> "There was at times in the spiritual attitude of Jesus a certain quality of remoteness and detachment from the social problems which were presented to his mind. He refused to be entangled in them. Distribution of property was not within his province. 'Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?' Forms of government were not for him to change. 'Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.'" Nothing is more obvious than that Jesus conceived of his mission as redemptive rather than reformatory. To bring men out of their estrangement and sin into relation with God as their Father; to deliver them from the bondage of hate and ambition, and greed and lust, into the abounding spiritual life and freedom of children of God—this was his work. But it was moral as well. If men were children of God, they must exhibit the marks of resemblance to their heavenly Father. They must be holy and perfect as he. They must regard all men as their brothers, and love them as they love themselves. These, and not social economics, were the things Jesus cared most about.

But Jesus was not a philosopher either—not a religious moralist whose teaching was unrelated to the movements and expectations of his day. He had shown his approval of John's enterprise by submitting to his baptism. And John the Baptist stood in vital relation to the prophets of the Old Testament, and as such had announced the immediate coming of the kingdom of God.

Jesus himself preached the same gospel, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and without doubt conceived of it as realized in His own person as Messiah. He stood, therefore, in vital relation to the concrete hopes and expectations of his people, and taught his disciples to labor and pray for the coming of the kingdom of God.

We are now face to face with the much-controverted question of how Jesus conceived of this kingdom. Did he transfer it to the

<sup>3</sup> Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 78.

inward life of man and translate the eschatological expectations of his time into purely religious and moral values? Did he, as has been held,<sup>4</sup> make the kingdom "the sum of all the good things belonging to the supernatural life of God's children, primarily the powers of holy truth and love acting on the human conscience and will"? Or was he, to go to the other extreme, completely a child of his time? And did he accept and share the apocalyptic ideals of the period in which he lived? And so did he look on the kingdom as future—or at least only proleptically present—and view his own work, like John's, as preparatory, his ethics as temporary, a sort of interim-morality, valid only until the conditions of the present age should be dissolved?

Into the merits of this present-day discussion we cannot enter here. Suffice it to say we do not believe either extreme is right. Jesus undoubtedly did universalize, spiritualize, and give moral content to the current expectations of his time, but his teachings as certainly contain apocalyptic elements which cannot be honestly eliminated. And yet for our present purpose it is significant that the apocalyptic elements are subordinate. The main interest is the ethico-religious. He cares little for eschatology in the narrower sense, and does not attempt to solve its problems. Much of the eschatological imagery which he uses has been well called "transmuted eschatology,"<sup>5</sup> because what in Jewish eschatology was spoken of as occurring at the end of the age, Jesus takes as present, and gives to it an inward rather than an outward meaning.

When we study the teaching of Jesus comparatively, we find he has far more in common with the Old Testament prophets than with the Apocalyptists, and, we may believe, with the apocalyptic movement of his times. He goes back to the prophets' theocratic idea of the kingdom, and like them draws out the religious and moral implications of the realization of the rule of God on earth. The kingdom is the new order of things which will result when God's will is done on earth as it is now done in heaven.

It is not a new world, as the Apocalyptists thought, which Jesus speaks of—but *this* world, only transformed and purified. And

<sup>4</sup> Muirhead, *Eschatology of Jesus*, p. 114.

<sup>5</sup> v. Dobschütz, *Eschatology of the Gospels*, p. 150.

it is with the transformation of the moral and spiritual elements Jesus is especially concerned. Consequently it cannot be said the hope of Jesus was "other-worldly" as the Apocalyptists' was. The present is ever in the foreground with him. And the future is brought in only as it relates to this.

Nor is Jesus' view characterized by pessimism. He has seen Satan fall already as lightning from heaven. His power is therefore broken and he has been bound by a stronger than he. The end of his dominion has already begun. So Jesus is no ascetic for whom the world is inherently evil. He came eating and drinking. He knew the joy of living, the beauty of nature, and the love of men and women and little children.

Nor did he allow individual aspects of the kingdom to do injustice to the social. He always viewed the individual not as isolated but in his relations to others, as a part therefore of the social organism. The world which is the opposite of the kingdom is evidently a name for the present social order, and it follows therefore that the kingdom is a social order too. There is no systematic teaching on the subject—for Jesus was an occasional preacher—but his teaching on wealth, on the family, on human fraternity, etc., show his was very emphatically a social ideal, and he looked forward to the consummation of the kingdom as a social hope.

For Jesus there was nothing artificial or mechanical about the messianic hope. All is natural and vital—because God for him is not remote and unrelated to his world, but immanent, present even in the beauty of the lily and the fall of the bird. If Jesus did not have the conception of development or evolution—and we must be careful about attributing to him the ideas of our own time—he comes very near it in the parables of the leaven and those based on the growth of the seed. The disciples are to labor for the kingdom's coming as well as pray for it—for the kingdom is a result to be striven for as well as a gift to be received from God.

In a word, we see that, however much or little Jesus may have been influenced by the apocalyptic movement, it did not in the slightest impair his social ideals of the kingdom. He goes back to the prophets of the Old Testament, yet he does not stop with them. He carries the conception far beyond their highest dreams,

not only in definiteness of detail, but in that he grounds the social hope in the very nature of God and man.

It is a true observation that "the determinative thing in religion is the idea of God."<sup>6</sup> The nobility and value of any religion depend on the purity and sublimity of its conception of God. Now Israel possessed, in her belief in an incomparably just and holy God, a regulative principle which produced in the Mosaic Law a governmental system which has no parallel for social justice in all antiquity. This same regulative principle lay also at the bottom of the prophets' social hope, and accounts for much of its unique sublimity.

But the great contribution of Jesus was that he taught, further, that God was man's Father; that he was the Father of all men, individually and alike, and that all were therefore brothers, and owed to each other the same love which God as Father bestowed on all. This doctrine of God lent at once a new dignity to man. As son of God the individual man, of whatever race or class, gained a new social value. He was the equal of every other man in the world. And he was no longer an individual standing apart by himself in lonely isolation. By the doctrine of brotherhood, or the divine family, he came into vital connection with every other man, and thus was grounded a new conception of the solidarity of the human race.

In Jesus' vicarious giving of himself and his life for others, there was born into the world a new principle of vicarious redemption—the sacrifice of self for others—of the individual for the good of all—and so a new way was opened for the realization of this unity and solidarity which Jesus had given to the ideal of man.

In these doctrines of Christ and Christianity lie regulative principles which are positively revolutionary. Consistently applied to the institutions and relationships of men, they mean the death of the old order of the world. These principles demand the establishment of a new order in which the organizing principles shall be love, co-ordination, and vicarious self-sacrifice.

How did the Christian church perceive and realize this ideal? Did it hold it ever consciously before itself, and strive consistently for its attainment? There is evidence that the Jewish-Christian

<sup>6</sup> Fairbairn, *Religion in History and in Modern Life*, pp. 117 f.

church did maintain in some measure the social aspect of Jesus' hope—witness, for example, the social teaching of the Epistle of James. But the church as a whole did not. It simply transferred the whole thing to heaven. So imbued was it with the apocalyptic idea, so saturated with eschatological conceptions, inherited from later Judaism, that the church immediately began to exalt the eschatological element in Jesus' teaching at the expense of other elements, and even to reinterpret some of his moral and spiritual teachings back into an eschatological dress. Paul looked for a redemption of creation, it is true, but it was thoroughly eschatological, and he had little interest in the social order as such.

New influences also added their impetus to the movement. The kingdom was soon identified with the church. And the city of God—a concrete embodiment of the hope, capable of social interpretation—was made equivalent to the ecclesiastical order. As Christianity was transplanted to Gentile soil, Greek individualism came in more and more to modify and destroy the collective hope. Further influences of Persian dualism tended also to spiritualize the conception of redemption and to make it more and more a deliverance from the evil of matter and the material world. In a way, the hope persisted in the doctrine of a millennium, or the thousand years' reign of Christ on earth, but even this gradually receded into the infinite future, and lost all connection with the struggle and effort of the present.

Nonetheless, these regulative or architectonic principles of Christianity were at work reforming and reorganizing society wherever they touched it. The history of Christianity is the history of such reformation. But this is different from saying that Christianity had for its great objective this hope of the redemption of society as the larger complement of the redemption of the individual. In this, Christianity has been signally unfaithful to the example and teaching of her Master.

We stand today in the midst of a new social awakening. There is evident everywhere what has been called a "rising passion for social reconstruction."<sup>7</sup> What place shall the church—that is, organized Christianity—take? Shall she surrender her original

<sup>7</sup> Scudder, *Harvard Theological Review*, 1911, p. 234.



ideal to those without her pale, who in the last analysis have only borrowed it from her prophets and her Lord? Can she safely trust his hope to unreligious hands? Can religion be divorced from the hope of social redemption and that redemption be ever more than formal, external, and futile at last? And, on the other hand, can the church, in an age when the choicest spirits are aroused and exalted by new social hopes, go on dreaming again her apocalyptic dreams, and calculating and recalculating again her mystic numbers, all unconscious that her Lord is coming as truly in the silent growth of righteousness and justice and love as in the clouds of heaven?

Is it not patent that men have largely lost interest in the old eschatology? It no longer supplies a vital motive. The preaching of the blisses of heaven and the torments of hell do not, as of old, bring men into "the ark of safety." The age is no longer blindly receptive of the intellectual inheritance of the past. Its cosmogony it has ceased to take from the Book of Genesis. Its eschatology it will not accept literally from the Book of Revelation. It asks to be shown the reason in the here and now.

And yet the real question is: Can the world get along without the religious and moral principles taught in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation? The world will have a social hope—never fear! But will that hope have a place for God in it—personal as well as all-pervasive, holy and just as well as kind and loving?

In seeking to modernize the Christian hope and find a motive which will appeal to men today, we are really trying to Christianize it again. It is but to take it back once more to conformity to the teaching of the prophets and of Christ himself. The symbol and form in which sometimes the Hope was embodied are indifferent. The significant thing is that Jesus taught the great objective of Christian effort is not heaven—but the kingdom of God; that the kingdom belongs primarily to this world and not to that of the transcendent world to come, and that Jesus thought of it as coming when God's will should be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Into what vagaries has not an insistence on eschatology brought Christianity? To what absurdity and futility has it not led interpretation? Its preposterous extravagances have been the ridicule

of Christian faith, and the sooner we stop calculating "the times and the seasons," and searching for the "eagles" and "their gathering together"—the better for Christianity. After all, it is only the "carcase" which is to be found by this method. The vital Christian hope lies elsewhere, and all this eschatological literalism is foreign to the true spirit of Christianity. It is the product of a decadent and unspiritual Judaism, and though Christian ideas have sometimes clothed themselves in its symbols, Jesus put the emphasis elsewhere, and set us the example by interpreting much of its imagery spiritually.

What a glorious summons the Christian hope presents! A hope that is at once social and religious: which aspires to link not only God and man, but God and humanity together! Irresistible will be the power of religious enthusiasm when applied to the establishment of social righteousness, and permanent the readjustment which has as its foundation the realization of the filial relationship between man and God. There is no antagonism between this and the personal hope of every Christian. It is but the larger fulfilment of that of which the individual hope is the suggestion. And the divine redemption will never be complete until a lost humanity is brought to God through Jesus Christ.

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF HINDUISM AS A RELIGION

PROFESSOR HERVEY D. GRISWOLD  
Forman Christian College, Lahore, India

The term "Hinduism" is taken as a general name to designate the form of religion dominant in India throughout the historical period, however much the general form may be broken up into particular sects. In this large sense of the term, Hinduism has been an enormous force in the world's history. India for the last three thousand years has been one of the most densely populated portions of the earth, and during most of the Christian centuries that form of Hinduism which proved historically fitted for export, namely, Buddhism, has powerfully influenced the whole Mongolian world. It is safe to say that during the last two thousand years, at least, Hinduism, as defined above, has influenced the life of nearly one-third of the human race.

In further elucidation of the religious significance of India in the world's history, it may be pointed out that there are on earth only two birthplaces or creative centers of the world's great religions, namely, *Palestine-Arabia* and *India-Persia*. And two races alone have been religiously creative, the Semitic race, producing Hebraism, Christianity, and Muhammadanism, and the Aryan race, producing Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism. These six highly organized and developed religions are all found in the Indian Empire, and their statistics according to the census of 1911 in round numbers are as follows:

1. Aryan religions	
a) Hinduism . . . . .	220,000,000+
b) Buddhism . . . . .	10,000,000+
c) Parseeism . . . . .	100,000
2. Semitic religions	
a) Muhammadanism . . . . .	68,000,000
b) Christianity . . . . .	3,876,000
c) Judaism . . . . .	21,000

Thus it will be seen at a glance that the Indian Empire is remarkable, not only as a birthplace of religions, but also as a

meeting-place and arena of conflict for all the great religions of the world. For example, in most non-Christian countries the chief opponent of Christianity is either Buddhism alone or Islam alone, but in the Indian Empire Christianity is confronted at once by Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism, the three strongest non-Christian religions.

It may not be without interest in this connection to remind ourselves that we of the West are largely Aryan, at least in language, and probably in blood as well, and that though we are now Semitic in religion, yet originally we were Aryan in this also, the original religion of most of us being Teutonic, Celtic, Slavonic, Roman, or Greek. The primitive Aryan religions of Europe have all been superseded by religions of Semitic origin, but in Asia Aryan religion still exists in full vigor. And India as the home of Hinduism and the birthplace of Buddhism has this permanent interest for all whose general connection is Aryan, that whatever of religious creativeness slumbered in the Aryan race in India and Persia alone came to full and abiding fruition. The earliest Aryan sacred scriptures are the Rig-Veda and the Avesta. And while the religions of Aryan Europe all fell before the triumphant western march of Semitism, the Aryan religions of India and Persia still influence the life of nearly one-third of the human race. Of the three great religious conquests of history, two consist of the Semitic conquest of Europe and the two Americas through Christianity, and the Semitic conquest of the Nearer East through Islam. The third is constituted by the Aryan conquest of the Farther East through Buddhism.

This general statement of the significance of Hinduism in the world's history is by way of introduction to a more concrete and definite characterization of it.

1. Hinduism has always had *the general animistic or pantheistic tendency to deify whatever is*.

This tendency may be illustrated from every period of its history. In the Rig-Veda, the earliest literary monument of Hinduism, divine honor is paid to heaven and earth, sun, wind, fire, dawn, rivers, mountains, trees, sacrificial implements, the cow, dead ancestors, etc., "gods many and lords many," any one of them being worshipped singly or all of them combined. The test for the selection

of objects for worship was a pragmatic one. Whatever force or object of nature was useful to man or striking in appearance or effects was a candidate for apotheosis. Just as in the Roman church there are conditions which must be fulfilled before the minor divinity of sainthood can be conferred, so in the Vedic age there were pragmatic tests which had to be fulfilled before the major divinity of godhead could be conferred. Take, for example, Agni, the Vedic fire-god. The uses of fire are manifold. It banishes darkness, dispels the goblins of the night, and frightens away enemies. It is the secret of vegetation and the growth of food. As heat it has to do with generation and life. Fire serves as a means for cooking, and in its character as the fire on the altar it was the center of the Vedic ritual. Given then an animistic or pantheistic attitude toward nature, and the apotheosis of fire is almost inevitable. The points of view which led to such apotheosis are presented with striking fulness and detail in the Agni-hymns of the Rig-Veda. Professor Max Müller has written a biography of Agni in his *Physical Religion*. But there is room for a still more penetrating psychological interpretation of Agni. Keeping in mind then the pragmatic test of usefulness and striking appearance, we can understand at once why such physical phenomena as the thunderbolt, the rain-cloud, fire, sun, wind, soma, the sacrificial liquor, dawn, etc., received deification.

Now the Vedic point of view has been the general point of view of Hinduism throughout its whole history. The Vedic presuppositions and the Vedic methods of apotheosis have been determinative and prophetic. Only last summer in a conversation with an orthodox Brahman in Kashmir I discovered that he regarded everything in nature, down to separate stick and stone and blade of grass, as possessed each by its own spirit. "Otherwise how could it exist at all?" he asked. This view of the Kashmiri Pandit reveals a fundamental characteristic of Hinduism, namely, a *radical* doctrine of the immanence of God. If the Christian believes that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19) and accordingly worships Christ as *the* incarnation of God, the Hindu believes that God is in sun, moon, wind, and thunderbolt, in cow, monkey, and serpent; in the *pipal* tree and the *tulsi* plant, in

Ram and Krishna, and he accordingly worships any or all of these as manifestations and incarnations of God. The underlying presupposition is the thoroughgoing immanence of God in nature. And since everything is a manifestation of the divine, it is left to the particular society or individual to select an *ishta devata*, or preferred god, each according to his own good pleasure. This thoroughgoing immanence is not to be construed as an equal immanence. Things differ in excellence. "One star differeth from another star in glory"; one animal, from another animal; one tree, from another tree; one man, from another man. Such differences are correlated, presumably, with the amount of the divine essence present in the things compared. The better the object or personality, the more of the divine essence presumably present. Hence the Hindu belief that God is present in a unique degree in the unique things of earth, e.g., in the ice-*linga* of the Amar Nath cave as compared with all other pieces of ice, in Ram and Krishna as contrasted with all other heroes, in the Brahman caste in comparison with all other castes, and in the Hindu people as distinguished from all other peoples.

2. A second general characteristic of Hinduism is *the tendency to syncretism*.

This also is abundantly illustrated in the Rig-Veda. As Hillebrandt well says, Vedic mythology is not a system, but a conglomerate, a kind of mythological "confusion of tongues," which arose through the coming together and fusion of the traditions of different clans (*Vedische Mythologie*, B. III, s. xii). In all probability each separate Vedic clan had originally its own tribal god, or at least had a simpler pantheon than that provided by the Rig-Veda collection in its final form. There is a good deal of evidence for the belief that the hymns to the "all-gods" as well as many hymns to dual gods are the work of mediatory theologians, *Vermittlungstheologen*, as Hillebrandt calls them. Consider the parallel situation in Israel in the days of Solomon and Ahab. Israel had its own tribal god *Yahweh*, but on account of the foreign alliances, both political and matrimonial, of Solomon and Ahab there was an incoming flood of religious syncretism, which threatened to destroy the old religious landmarks altogether. *Yahweh* was in danger of being

placed on the same level with Baal and Ashtoreth of the Sidonians, Chemosh of the Moabites, and Milcom of the Ammonites. And in spite of the strong protest on the part of Elijah and other prophets, syncretism almost carried the day. But in Vedic India there was no protest, so far as is known, against such a mediatory tendency. In fact, syncretism is according to the very genius of Hinduism. For example, in the *Indra-Agni* hymns of the Rig-Veda Agni is assimilated to Indra and Indra to Agni. The *Bhagavadgita* is also a monument of religious syncretism. And *Buddha* was taken into the Hindu system and made one of the incarnations of *Visnu*. If everything alike is a manifestation of God according to the principle of radical immanence, then each people or tribe has a right to worship anything in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, according to its own sovereign taste and pleasure. This helps to explain the boundless hospitality which Hinduism has always shown toward every conceivable form of religious belief and practice. For it too is missionary—in its own way. It annexes, not individuals, but whole tribes and communities. The history of India up to the tenth Christian century is largely the history of the spread of Aryan religion and culture throughout the whole land. The conversion of a tribe to Hinduism meant its acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Brahmans and its enrolment as a separate caste in the Hindu system. These were the essentials. As regards religious faith and practice, the newly Hinduized tribe would be free to make any adjustment it pleased—usually a compromise between its own gods and the gods of the Hindu pantheon. Thus it will be seen that in the long process of the Aryanization of India the non-Aryan peoples must have contributed to the joint stock of religious customs and traditions almost as much as they received.

Now on similar terms Hinduism would be quite willing to absorb every people on earth. Thus Hinduism presents itself as a kind of gigantic religious octopus which is ready to swallow up any and every thing within its reach. Now there is syncretism and syncretism. There is no fault to be found with the syncretism which proves all things and holds fast that which is good, whatever its source may be. Such syncretism is critical and rational, and is one of the main sources of religious progress. But the trouble with the

syncretism of Hinduism is just this, that it is *uncritical*. The supreme tests for admission to the fold of Hinduism are not moral or intellectual, but *social*—the adoption of caste-organization and the acknowledgment of Brahman supremacy. The essential element in Hinduism, then, is not belief, but social organization. This fact explains why it is that the Hindu finds fault with the Christian missionary, not for preaching Christ in India, but only for *baptizing*. It is the disruption of the Hindu social system rather than a change of belief, which is feared.

The Hindu tendency to syncretism explains also the interesting religious fusions which are the result in India of the meeting of different faiths. For example, *Sikhism* and the *Kabirpanth* are the fruit of the contact of Hinduism with Islam; and the *Brahmo Samâj*, *Prârthnâ Samâj*, *Chet Rami Sect*, and even the *Arya Samâj* and the *Deva Samâj* are the fruit of the similar contact of Hinduism with Christianity. Neo-Vedantism also represents the old Vedantism as modified by modern influences, especially by Christianity. Among the more notable Neo-Vedanta preachers who have visited the West, both Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ram Tirath were graduates of mission colleges. They represent an interesting by-product of Christian work in India.

3. A third characteristic of Hinduism is *the contrast which it accepts and justifies between "hieratic" and "popular" religion*.

This contrast already appears in the earliest or Vedic stratum of Hindu religion. The Rig-Veda (including the *Sâma* and *Yajur* Vedas which are largely extracts from the *Rig*) is on the whole hieratic or priestly. The *Atharva-Veda*, on the other hand, is "demotic" and represents the magic practices, spells, incantations, etc., of popular religion. But notice that the Rig-Veda and the Atharva-Veda were both alike received into the Hindu canon. The stamp of divine authority was affixed, not only to the textbook of priestly religion, but also to the textbook of popular religion. It is as if the Old Testament contained, in addition to the prophetic writings, an equal portion devoted to the popular practices of sorcery, incantation, and witchcraft as seen, for example, in the raising of Samuel by the witch of Endor. Prophetic religion in Old Testament times had a long fierce struggle with popular religion,



but there was never any such reconciliation with popular religion as is seen in the inclusion of both the Rig-Veda and the Atharva-Veda in one (and that too the most sacred) canon of Hindu holy scripture. The Hindu sacred books which are accessible to the West through translations are, on the whole, repositories of "hieratic" religion, e.g., the Four Vedas (including *Mantras*, *Brahmaṇas*, and *Upaniṣads*), the Law-books, the Six Systems of Philosophy, the Bhagavadgita, the Epics, etc. Popular religion consists of the more or less unwritten practice of the ignorant masses of India, as described, for example, in Crooke's *Popular Religion of Northern India*. The most important doctrines of Hindu "hieratic" religion are the doctrines of *Brahma* and *mâyâ*, the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul, transmigration, and *karma*. It is usually found that the crudest form of popular religion is shot through with more or less of hieratic doctrine, especially with the doctrines of transmigration and *karma*. Here too the Hindu tendency to syncretism is illustrated. But the point to be emphasized is that the existence of popular religion, however crude and even immoral it may be, is justified by Hinduism on the ground that it represents a necessary stage of progress in the soul's development. And so there has been as yet no large effort on the part of learned Hinduism to correct the errors and crudities and immoralities of popular religion. The theory has been that no interference is necessary, since through the operation of transmigration and *karma* every soul, however debased, will by means of repeated births finally attain to its proper goal. Hence extra-caste altruism has no real root in Hinduism. The supreme duty of every man is faithfully to follow the rules of his caste.

4. A fourth characteristic of Hinduism is *the dominance of the religious point of view in all the affairs of life*, or the supremacy of the religious consciousness.

In Hinduism more fully perhaps than even in orthodox Judaism religion embraces the whole of life. One explanation of this is that the separation which has been made in the West between social custom and religion has never taken place in India. In the long course of the conversion of India to Hinduism each tribe and community brought, not only its religious practices, but also its social customs

into the Hindu system and all alike received in time a religious sanction. The cake of custom has been broken in the West, but in the East it still remains intact. Hence Christianity and Hinduism touch common life differently. The principle of Christianity is, "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). But the principle of Hinduism is, "Whether ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all" according to fixed rule and established custom. Liberty prevails in Christianity; legalism, in Hinduism. This explains why Eastern peoples in general and Hindus in particular seem at first sight so religious. It is because their religion consists so largely in the punctilious performance of an elaborate body of religiously consecrated custom touching every detail of life.

In view of this fact some abatement should be made from the emphasis placed in recent days on the Hindu religious consciousness. Nevertheless, after all reasonable deduction has been made, it still remains true that the Indian consciousness is primarily and fundamentally, not political, economic, or artistic, but *religious*. The vast Sanskrit literature of India is almost entirely religious. The great movements of India have been religious movements. India's influence on the outside world has been religious only. The great characters of India, so far as recorded, have been religious. India has been religiously creative in the past and may again be so in the future. To this day every strong religious personality in India cherishes the ambition of religious creativeness. All of which means that the people of India are richly endowed with the religious instinct and consciousness.

5. A fifth characteristic of Hinduism is *great reverence for the ideal of renunciation and great capacity for sacrifice*.

There is no land on earth where there is such reverence for the religious mendicant and such readiness on the part of multitudes for a life of extreme hardship and even of self-inflicted torture as in India. But here too the reverence for the ideal of renunciation is too often an uncritical and indiscriminating reverence, which is responsible for the existence in India of no less than five and one-half millions of mendicants, vast numbers of whom are certainly not religious in any sense, and as a non-producing element in the population are a serious economic drag on the community. In like

manner the capacity for self-sacrifice in connection with religion has too often realized itself in selfish and unpractical ways, the religious devotee usually being supremely concerned about his own salvation alone, and seeking it by a process of self-annihilation rather than of self-development. But if the time ever comes when India's religious creativeness, and spiritual passion, and capacity for sacrifice are linked to worthy ends, then the long travail of India's religious experience will finally justify itself by bearing much fruit. At any rate, the ideal of renunciation for spiritual ends and the capacity for sacrifice must be reckoned among the spiritual assets of Hinduism.

6. A sixth and last characteristic of Hinduism to be mentioned is *the existence in it of aspirations and anticipations still largely unfulfilled and unsatisfied.*

Such aspirations appear already in the Rig-Veda. Practically every one of the nine or ten hymns addressed to *Varuna* contains a confession of sin and a cry for pardon. Thus there is the clearly expressed aspiration for pardon and restored fellowship with Deity. But the consciousness of having found pardon and restored fellowship is not so clear. This may account for the fact that the penitential type of hymn practically ceased with the *Varuna*-hymns of the Rig-Veda. A vital experience of forgiveness was not rooted in the Indian religious consciousness.

Of the ten incarnations of *Viṣṇu* nine according to Hindu belief have already come and the tenth as opposed to all the rest is to be a *Niṣkalāṅkh Avatâr* or *sinless incarnation*. The Hindu expectation of a sinless incarnation yet to come is as pathetic as the Jewish expectation of a messiah yet to come. It is a testimony to the Hindu hope that the final incarnation as sinless will deal adequately with the problem of sin.

The profoundest formula of the most rigidly monistic type of the *Vedānta* is *Aham Brahma*, "I am Brahma." Whatever else this formula may mean, it voices the aspiration of the saintliest thinkers of India for a union with Deity so close as to be equivalent to *identity*. It expresses the longing of the Indian heart for release from the trammels of the phenomenal world, and participation in the changeless perfection of the Absolute.

Such then is Hinduism as treated in barest outline. As we have

seen, Hinduism is a generic term for the totality of the religious and social customs found in India, so far as they are organized by the adoption of caste and the recognition of the social and religious supremacy of the Brahmans. As a system then Hinduism is as vast and amorphous as the sea. It is based upon a radical theory of the immanence of God in all things. Its method of growth and development is through syncretism. Its whole tendency has been to touch with religious sanction whatever is, consecrating some of the worst things as well as the best. But at the same time the vast and chaotic fabric of Hinduism is shot through with profound ideas and illumined here and there with lofty aspirations and splendid gleams of insight. Hinduism has always been rich in scholars and ascetic saints.

It is difficult to estimate Hinduism's contribution to the world. As the mother of Buddhism she has profoundly influenced the Mongolian nations. In her emphasis on the immanence of God she is helping to correct the tendency in some lands to an equally exaggerated doctrine of transcendence. But perhaps, when all is said, Hinduism's greatest contribution to the religious progress of humanity will prove to be a negative one. Through her very hospitality to every form of religious belief and practice Hinduism has been a sphere for an exhaustive series of religious experiments. If she has not discovered the way for the regeneration of India and of the world, she has at least revealed the inadequacy of the religious experiments which she herself has tried. Her greatest service, perchance, is as a preparation for something better. If, in spite of the fact that Judaism seemed to be the greatest obstacle to the spread of Christianity, Paul could say: "The law is our school-master to bring us to Christ," then we are perhaps justified in saying the same thing of Hinduism, namely, that it is a *preparatory discipline* for Christianity. Hinduism will doubtless bring with it its noblest traits and points of view, for Christ "came not to destroy, but to fulfil." Hence in the final form of India's religion we may be sure that not one single grain of wheat garnered in all its history will be cast away. But more than this, we may be sure, positively, that the religious creativeness, the spiritual passion, and the capacity for sacrifice of the Indian people will then be called out by worthy ends and will flow forth to quicken and enrich the world.

## THEOLOGY AND THE HISTORY OF RELIGION

---

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
The University of Chicago

---

One of the fundamental aspects of the theology of the past was its dependence on a super-historical basis for its assurance of truth. In its consistent Catholic form, theology claims the devotion of men because of the alleged divine origin of its dogmas and the alleged divine authority of the church to promulgate and to guard from the error the doctrines of Christianity. Such a claim of divine origin removes doctrine from the realm of history. We do not have to trace the way in which humanity arrived at religious convictions, but rather to validate the supernatural way in which these doctrines came into the possession of man. The conception of "revealed" truth is a familiar one, the assumption being that there has been donated to man in an extraordinary fashion something which his own efforts could never have reached. The Bible, containing this revelation, is thus looked upon as a literature unique in its origin, containing truths which the natural mind of man could never have conceived.

One of the important results of biblical criticism, as we have previously shown, is the perception of the historical genesis of the messages of the Bible. The attempt is constantly being made by scholars to trace the pathway by which a biblical author came to the conclusion which he uttered. Now the moment we make this attempt, we are forced to try to reproduce in imagination the exact situation which confronted the man who was striving to express his convictions. The consequence of this historical interpretation is the emergence into prominence of certain elements which were ignored by the theologians who did not feel under obligation to consider historical conditions in their interpretation of the Scriptures. For when one tries to reproduce in imagination the experiences and the questionings which gave rise to a given doctrine in the mind of a man, one is compelled to recognize that the

thinking of any individual is conditioned by the items of history which lie in his immediate environment. Thus there has grown up a method of interpreting the writings of biblical writers which lays under tribute all that we know of the conditions under which these writers did their thinking.

At first sight it does not seem that this would compel serious modifications of our conception of the task of theology. What if we do trace in imagination the way in which Paul arrived at his conclusions? Will it make any essential difference in the validity of those conclusions? May we not use them in our constructive work just as we did before? A little further consideration of the outcome of historical criticism, however, shows that certain consequences are inevitable so soon as we seriously undertake the task of the historical study of religion. As we have said, the validity of Christian ideas has been defended on the ground that in these ideas we have unique revelations of truth otherwise inaccessible to humanity. The religious ideas of Israel have been prized because they were believed to have had an origin unlike the ideas of any other people, and therefore to contain truth not found elsewhere. The specifically Christian doctrines have been expounded and defended on the ground that nowhere save in the Bible do we have such religious conceptions as that of a divine redeemer and an efficacious atonement. The uniqueness of Christianity in origin and content has been the natural corollary of the theory that true religion comes from a super-historical rather than a historical source. Christianity has been pictured as free from the limitations which are inevitable in a religion of purely historical origin.

Now as our acquaintance with the historical conditions of the rise of biblical doctrine has been enlarged, it has become increasingly difficult to preserve the uniqueness of some of the elements which were formerly regarded as tokens of the divine origin and authority of Christian doctrine. This point will be made clear if we briefly refer to some concrete results of historical criticism.

#### I. GENTILE ELEMENTS IN JEWISH THEOLOGY

In 1872 the English scholar, Mr. George Smith, discovered what he believed to be a Babylonian parallel to the biblical account of

the Deluge and in 1875, a similar parallel to the biblical account of the creation. These discoveries aroused active interest in the religions of these peoples, and especially in the relations between the ideas of Babylonia and Assyria and those of the Hebrews. As excavations have proceeded the world has come into possession of whole libraries of information preserved on bricks and tablets.

Now Old Testament scholars have come to feel that, if we are to understand the actual history of the religion of Israel, we must avail ourselves of the help which comes from this knowledge of the larger world which surrounded Israel. Many of us can remember learning the details of what in our United States histories was called the "French and Indian War." So long as that was looked at from the standpoint of American colonial history alone, its true significance did not appear. But when we came to see that it was a chapter in the struggle of European powers for supremacy, we saw that the immediate interests of the colonists were entirely secondary to European issues. In a similar way, the knowledge of the history of ancient Babylon and Egypt enables us to see the history of Israel in a new perspective. We find that there was a great civilization, a mighty literature, an elaborate system of laws in existence long before Bible times. Egypt and Babylon now appear as the great contributors to the civilization of the world while Israel was a comparatively unimportant factor in the making of secular history or in the development of civilization. We find that the Hebrews originated very little in the realm of science and less than was once supposed in the realm of cultus. We have in the law code of Hammurabi such striking parallels to provisions of the Mosaic code that we are compelled to raise the question how the biblical legislation is related to non-Israelitic models. We discover that circumcision is by no means an exclusive rite of the children of Abraham, but has been in existence among numerous peoples and from times far antedating Abraham. Sacrifices and forms of worship which earlier generations thought to be peculiar to the people of the Old Testament are paralleled in other religions. Such are some of the facts which have been brought out by our increased knowledge of the Babylonian and other religions. Indeed, so impressed have some enthusiastic scholars been

by the discovery of this marvelous ancient civilization that they have become devotees of the theory that everything in the history of the world comes originally from Babylonia.

To experts must be left the complicated questions as to the exact limits of the relationship between the religion of Babylon and the developing religion of Israel. But apart from detailed conclusions, there is for the theologian one important result. This will appear if we ask the question whether we can hold that there was a "pure" Hebrew religion, in the sense that it contained absolute truth while the religions of other nations were false. The moment we ask this question, we see that the religion of the Hebrews was a growth and that this growth was conditioned by the contact of the Hebrews with the various events of the world in which they lived. Other influences had been powerful in the land of Canaan for centuries before the Israelites entered. It is evident from a reading of the Old Testament that the Hebrews were unable to resist the influence of the religious customs which they found in existence. Historical scholars are trying to piece together the fragments of evidence which we possess, in order to ascertain just what religious changes took place in connection with the experience of abandoning a nomadic life for a life of agriculture and settled civilization. While there are differences of opinion as to the exact nature of these changes, the fact is universally recognized that in the settlement of Canaan there was involved an intermingling of the religion which the Israelites brought with them and the religion which they found in the land. Again, when we remember the constant pressure of Assyria and later of Babylonia on the political fortunes of the Hebrews; when we recall how the prophets were constantly taking account of these foreign movements, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the religion of Israel took its final form partially under the influence of contact with these gentiles. Did the example of the splendid rituals of Babylon have anything to do with the enrichment of the cultus of the Hebrews after the exile? Did the Persian conception of life after death with retribution for every soul have any influence in the development of this new doctrine in the later thought of Judaism? What are the influences which entered into the rise and development of



the Wisdom literature? Is the Book of Ecclesiastes a reflection of hellenized Jewish thought?

These are some of the questions which must be considered today by anyone who would understand the Old Testament. The very possibility of asking such questions shows that it is no longer possible to conceive the religion of Israel as an isolated whole. It owes its specific form and content to the fact that the leaders of Hebrew thought were forced by contact with other religious ideals and with the worldly triumph of nations holding other faiths to consider earnestly and honestly the fundamental religious problems of their day. Out of this clash and conflict of Israel with other nations came the religion of the Old Testament. The historical method of study compels us to recognize that other nations made their contribution to the marvelous structure of religious faith which we find recorded in the Old Testament. The genius of the Hebrew mind in transforming many of the details of the religious conceptions which they derived from other sources is, of course, undeniable. But the absolute distinction between the religion of the Hebrews and the religion of non-Hebraic peoples can no longer be held.

## II. PAGAN ELEMENTS IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

The Protestant Reformation marked the beginning of a discriminating attitude toward the inherited Christian system. Luther insisted that when one looked critically at the body of doctrines and practices which the Catholic church had regarded as divinely authorized, one found certain elements which must be regarded as human accretions. Later Protestant theology distinctly undertook to set forth evangelical doctrine in a system of "pure" Christian truth, as over against the corrupted system of Catholicism. When once this critical attitude is assumed, history comes to be of importance; for through historical development it can be ascertained how and when perversions entered into the Christian system. If a human origin can be shown for any items, such an origin excludes them from the divinely authorized system of truth.

But the Protestant theologians generally assumed that the Nicene theology embodied the substance of biblical truth. The

splendid doctrines of the great standard creeds were retained as essentially identical with the New Testament teaching. More accurate historical knowledge, however, showed that a process of historical evolution in doctrine was just as characteristic of the period before the great ecumenical councils as it was of the subsequent period. The consequences of that evolution were strikingly described by Dr. Edwin Hatch, in his famous Hibbert Lectures on "The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church." Said Dr. Hatch:

It is impossible for anyone, whether he be a student of history or not, to fail to notice the difference both of form and of content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants; the other to a world of Greek philosophers.

Here is a distinct challenge to the theory that the Nicene theology is identical with that of the New Testament. Changes are seen to have taken place within the first three centuries of Christian history no less surely than in later centuries. Under the brilliant leadership of Albrecht Ritschl and his famous disciple, Adolf Harnack, the history of Christianity in this early period received a new reading. Evangelical Christianity was shown to have been transformed into Catholic Christianity before the end of the second century. Thus the way was open for a discrimination between the simpler "pure" Christianity of primitive times and the human accretions of later generations which Catholicism stamped with her approval. Harnack characterized the first three centuries as the period of the "hellenization" or "secularization" of Christianity. His history of dogma is really a plea for a return to the simpler gospel of primitive times.

But historical research did not stop with the discovery of an evolution of doctrine after New Testament times. It has also undertaken to give to the New Testament itself a genuinely his-

torical interpretation. Exactly as Old Testament scholars have made use of all available information in order to reproduce in imagination the problems, hopes, aspirations, and habits of thought of the writers of Hebrew literature, so New Testament scholars today are abandoning the older dogmatic interpretation of the literature of primitive Christianity, and are seeking in the light of philological and historical data to comprehend exactly what the words and phrases of a given writer meant to the writer himself. Upon investigation, it turns out that the meaning is inevitably conditioned by the current ideas of the age. If men are to think at all, they must do their thinking in terms of the culture with which they are familiar.

But the moment one recognizes this fact, the distinction between "sacred" and "secular" elements is hard to draw. For it turns out that some of the doctrines, or at least some elements of the doctrines which we have no wish to exclude, came from non-Christian sources. The early Christians did not live in insulation from the thought-movements of their time. Consequently, exactly as in the case of Israel the doctrinal expression of beliefs was shaped partly by the stimulus of gentile forces, so Christian doctrine took its form partly under the influence of the pagan ideas of the time.

One of the most interesting and effective examples of this newer point of view may be found in Professor Weinel's attempt<sup>1</sup> to make real to us the character and the achievements of the apostle Paul. He provides for his readers the indispensable prerequisites for a historical interpretation by giving an interesting description of the elements which were common to all thought in the time of Paul. Weinel points out that such items as the belief in a universe constructed in three-story form, belief in the existence and activity of demons and spirits with power to act in the affairs of men, belief in the near end of the present world and the establishment of a miraculous new kingdom, were not peculiar to Paul, and cannot be ascribed to Christianity. They formed the common ideas in which men did their thinking in the Jewish world of that time.

<sup>1</sup> Weinel, *Paulus*. Tübingen, 1904. English translation, entitled *Saint Paul, the Man, and His Work*. London, 1906.

Thus even though they are embodied in the theology of the New Testament, we have to recognize their non-Christian origin.

The embodiment in Christianity of Jewish elements is not a new thought. But certain hitherto unsuspected questions are raised, as scholars make use of the wider information drawn from contemporary pagan history. As this study of the general conditions of religious thought in the world at the beginning of the Christian era advances, we are discovering that many elements which former generations believed to be unique in Christianity are really the common property of various types of religious thinking in the first century. Professor Loisy has vividly characterized this point of view in an article entitled "The Christian Mystery," in the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1911. After mentioning three or four typical religious cults which proclaimed a doctrine of salvation through the efficacy of a god who died and rose again, thus providing redemption for his followers, he remarks, concerning the Pauline doctrine of redemption through Christ:

He [Christ] was a savior-god after the manner of an Osiris, an Attis, a Mithra. Like them he belonged by his origin to the celestial world; like them, he had made his appearance on earth; like them, he had accomplished a work of universal redemption, efficacious and typical; like Adonis, Osiris, and Attis he had died a violent death, and like them he had returned to life; like them, he had prefigured in his lot that of human beings who should take part in his worship and commemorate his mystic enterprise; like them he had predetermined, prepared, and assured the salvation of those who became partners in his passion.<sup>2</sup>

Thus it appears that some of the aspects of the doctrine of atonement which have been regarded as exclusively and uniquely Christian were known and religiously used in non-Christian circles.

The novelty of this discovery of a wider origin than was formerly supposed for some of the doctrines which have found their way into Christian theology has led enterprising spirits recently to attempt to deny all originality to Christianity. The "Christ-myth" has been asserted to be merely the imaginative creation of the religious thinking of the times, and to be simply a variant of the more general myth of redemption through the sufferings and death of a god. The unscholarly nature of such wholesale

<sup>2</sup> *Hibbert Journal*, X, No. 1 (October, 1911), p. 51.

elimination of the historical character of early Christianity has been convincingly shown.<sup>3</sup> But after all allowance has been made for exaggerations and rash inferences, it still remains true that the barriers between Christian and non-Christian thinking have been removed in many places where it was supposed that Christianity was in possession of a uniquely revealed doctrine. Indeed, scholars are ceasing to attempt to understand the meaning of the New Testament by isolating it from all other literature. On the contrary, it is only as it is placed into relations with all that we know concerning the world in which it arose that its real meaning becomes apparent.

This attitude on the part of New Testament scholarship means that the systematic theologian must make his method of explaining doctrine consonant with the historical point of view. If it be found that certain conceptions of redemption, of the efficacy of sacraments, of immortality, are common to Christianity and to other cults of the time, it is no longer possible to affirm the truth of Christian ideas on the ground that outside Christianity nothing but false or perverted ideas are found. One is rather compelled to recognize that men of the first century within Christian circles and without were feeling a deep need of redemption which furnished the stimulus to the elaboration of certain typical theories of salvation. To be saved meant to be transformed by divine power. The way in which the acquisition of that divine power was attained was pictured in similar ways by various cults. Formally the Christian doctrine of salvation, as formulated by Paul, is like the doctrines formulated by non-Christian cults. The *Zeitgeist* furnished to all religions alike certain doctrinal and ritualistic formulae. The real difference between Christianity and other cults lies in the fact that Christianity colored these common forms and doctrines with the spiritual light of the character and influence of Jesus. But the contingent nature of many aspects of the doctrinal interpretation of Christian salvation in the New Testament is evident so soon as we know history.

Our Christian doctrines thus appear to have a more broadly human origin than was once supposed. The light of life was not

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Shirley J. Case, *The Historicity of Jesus*. Chicago, 1912.

shut up within the boundaries of a particular race or a particular sect. Many experiments were being made by mankind to find the way to God and to the experience of divine salvation. The fact that many of these attempts were not adequate, and were eventually superseded, ought not to blind us to their positive value. The theologian who appreciates the historical point of view will therefore be broader in his sympathies than is the man who thinks of Christianity as something so utterly unlike other religions that there can be only warfare between them.

Moreover, when it is realized that religious thinking could not be done in insulation from the current ideas and ideals even in the first century and by the apostles, it affects the attitude of the theologian toward the ideas and ideals which are peculiar to the age in which he lives. The legitimacy of the aspirations and convictions of living men will be more easily recognized. If "secular" ideas entered into biblical doctrines, if the theology of the Nicene period is a product of the Hellenistic spirit, why should not the theology of the twentieth century heartily welcome all possible aid from modern ethical, social, and scientific conceptions? Indeed it becomes evident to one who has come to see the living and fluid nature of the biblical theology that the spirit of that theology will be lost if the theologian refuses to admit to his thinking the contributions which may be made by his own age. The task of theology is thus no longer that of the defense of a predetermined system. It becomes the inductive study of religious aspirations and of the world in which religious men live, in order to determine how best in theory and in practice they may realize the transforming influence of the spiritual power which Christianity has made effective in human history. If elements of the biblical theology may be traced to the "secular" influences of biblical times, the theologian ought to lose his fear lest his doctrines will necessarily be perverted if they take account of the best secular knowledge of our own day. The historical understanding of the growth of religion takes away that dread of revision which is felt by the traditionalist; it furnishes instead a mighty impetus toward a constructive interpretation of the presence and activity of God in the larger universe in which we dwell today.

It may not be superfluous to add that if the adoption of the historical attitude eliminates that conception of finished perfection which formerly attached to the doctrines of the church, it also forbids an attitude of dogmatism in regard to modern theology. When we see how inevitably religious beliefs are linked to the prevalent ideals of an age, and when we further note the fact that ideals change from century to century, the theologian of today may well be humble in his estimate of his work. If he can serve his day and generation well, it should be all that he ought to expect. In any case, it will be the spirit of his work which will endure, rather than the formal elements. A new dogmatism ought to be forever impossible to one who has really learned what history has to teach. As Schleiermacher showed a century ago, the theologian is formulating the beliefs of his own contemporaries, and his work will inevitably share the limitations of the thinking of his age.

The outcome, then, of a critical, historical understanding of Christianity is the turning of attention from doctrines as such to the function of doctrines in actual human life. Instead of starting from theories concerning God and man, we start with those experiences of men which lead them to aspire for communion with God, and to construct religious hypotheses in order to further that communion. We are thus led from the realm of history to the realm of the inner life. The next question to be faced by the theologian is therefore a psychological one, inquiring more accurately concerning the place of religious belief in religious experience. The next article will discuss this problem.

## THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF COLORADO COLLEGE

PROFESSOR EDWARD S. PARSONS  
Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colo.

"I should as soon think of spending my life in setting up an empty dry-goods box on these vast plains as to erect a college emptied of Christianity." These words from the inaugural of President Tenney of Colorado College<sup>1</sup> express the spirit of the founders of the institution. Organized under a resolution of the General Conference of the Congregational churches of Colorado, adopted January 21, 1874, it was designed from the beginning to be "forever Christian but without ecclesiastical control."<sup>2</sup> As General Palmer, the most generous and loyal friend of the college, who laid out the city of Colorado Springs and set aside in its original plat a large tract of land to be used for college purposes, said in breaking ground for the first college building:<sup>3</sup> "Let us forever devote it and the structure which is to rise upon it to the purpose of education in the most unsectarian way, to the discovery and inculcation of truth." The charter of the college requires that the corporation shall never be under the control of any sect, and that no officer, teacher, or student shall be required to submit to any denominational or theological test to enter or remain in the institution. But it declares explicitly that the institution is to be maintained "under Christian auspices." The purpose of the founders was thus to erect on a spot which was then one of the outposts of American civilization a college which should be untrammelled by the tenets of any sect, but should teach young men and women to think and live in the spirit of Christ.

The enterprise was in its inception missionary, and most of the early donors gave to the college from the same motives that prompted them to give to missions. The early appeals for the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tenney was president from 1876 until 1885.

<sup>2</sup> Haskell, *Collegiate Education in Colorado*, p. 14. This pamphlet is the report of the Committee of the General Congregational Conference of Colorado, on the basis of which Colorado College was organized in January, 1874.

<sup>3</sup> July 4, 1877.



support of the institution were concentrated upon the hope and the conviction that it was destined to be of effective service in meeting the needs, intellectual and spiritual, of the Spanish-speaking peoples and in helping to solve the problem of Mormonism, in the western states and territories. Joseph Cook remarked upon these phases of the opportunity of the college in a prelude to one of his Monday lectures:<sup>4</sup> "There is a Colorado College now in process of construction. It hopes to stand as a lighthouse for the range of the Rocky Mountains and the great valley between the Sierras and Colorado. . . . How sublime is the duty of lighting college beacons to blaze afar from the Rocky Mountains and the Mexican heights. 'We have,' says President Tenney, 'mediaeval Spanish Catholicism voting in Colorado. If the Spirit of the Lord descends with tongues of fire on a Christian college in the New West, it is likely that one of the tongues will be Spanish.'"

The spirit of its founders and early leaders was a guaranty of the religious and missionary attitude of the early college. Its unsectarian ideal was evidently also realized: "Out of the whole number of students in attendance during the last three years [1876-79] one-fifth have been Methodist, nearly one-fifth Episcopalian, nearly one-fifth Congregational, at least one-eighth Presbyterian and Cumberland Presbyterian, and the remainder have belonged to some other denomination or have had no denominational connection." At that time, probably four-fifths of the student body had church homes other than that to which the majority of the trustees belonged.<sup>5</sup>

Thus in its foundation and in its early spirit Colorado College greatly resembled the typical New England college which its founders sought to imitate. Through the thirty-seven years during which it has been in existence, it has sought to hold this ideal constantly before its students, and in spite of the great changes through which the institution has passed, it continues true to its founders and their purpose.

<sup>4</sup> February 18, 1878.

<sup>5</sup> From an article in the *Mountaineer*, Colorado Springs, November 2, 1879, by Professor W. D. Sheldon, then of Colorado College, now vice-president of Girard College.

The student body of today numbers 501, exclusive of 57 enrolled in music courses and 22 who, early in the year, took the short course for forest rangers. These students are distributed as follows:

	Men	Women
Arts.....	158	238
Engineering.....	67	...
Forestry.....	38	...
Total.....	263	238

A study of the birthplaces and present place of residence of these young people is suggestive. Of the number, 192 were born in Colorado and 362 west of the Mississippi River in 20 different states; 12 were born in New England, 10 in New York, 5 in New Jersey, 12 in Pennsylvania, and 16 in Ohio; 25 were born in the South, and 8 on the Pacific coast. The birthplaces of all the students include 40 states and the District of Columbia. Fifteen were born in foreign countries—Canada, England, Ireland, Germany, France, Switzerland, Poland, and Japan.

The *homes* of 454 students are west of the Mississippi, 390 residing in Colorado. New York has sent 8, New England 6, Pennsylvania 3, New Jersey 2, Illinois 13, the Pacific coast 6, and five southern states 7. Twenty-seven states and two foreign countries, Canada and Japan, are represented.

It will be seen that the influences which have helped shape the young people have been very diverse. In such an institution the intellectual and religious type cannot be as definite as it is in one which draws largely from one locality, and that a long-settled one.

The religious distribution of the students shows that the ideals of the founders are not forgotten today. During the last two years the church members have been in the following proportions:

	1910-11	1911-12
Percentage of students members of churches.....	72	73
Percentage of men among church members.....	45	47
Percentage of women among church members ...	55	53

The percentage of church membership has, during the last two years, been distributed among the denominations as follows:

	Pres- byteri- an	M e h- odist	Con- grega- tional	Epis- copa- lian	Bap- tist	Chris- tian	Roman Catho- lic	Lu- theran	Jewish	Chris- tian Science
1910-11.....	33	19	14	10	9	7	4	1	1	1
1911-12.....	32	19	14	11	11	4	4	2	1	3

In 1904 and 1905 the Congregational students numbered 24 per cent and 30 per cent respectively, but since that time have never reached more than 21 per cent, while the Presbyterians have twice during the same period numbered 35 per cent. Eight and seven years ago the Baptists formed 22 per cent and 16 per cent of the student body, but their present proportion is that which they have maintained for several years. The other denominations have kept about the average indicated for a considerable period, except the Jewish, Lutheran, and Christian Science, each of which has slightly increased.

As is well known, the West is more conservative theologically than the East; hence the home and church influences about the young people have been on the whole conservative. But the students have proved themselves thoughtful and open to broadening influences. There has not been in the student body the widespread intellectual struggle with religious problems which has characterized the life of so many eastern institutions, but the progress to the newer in thought has been slower, a gradual broadening rather than a sudden upheaval. There has been very little loss of faith. The attempt has been made on the part of the college to do constructive work in the field of philosophical and biblical study, and for almost all students the gulf into which elsewhere so many plunge has been successfully bridged.

The moral standards of the college have always been high. This fact has been frequently commented upon by members of the faculty coming from other institutions and by students acquainted elsewhere. There are fewer temptations of the grosser sort in Colorado Springs, where there are no open saloons, and where the religious influences are stronger than in many college towns. More-

over, the student body has fewer financial resources than in many institutions. The majority of the men of the college are earning their way wholly or in part. Colorado College has happily not yet reached the stage when students come to it from families of large means, simply for "a social experience."

The faculty of the college have always been a potent influence in its religious life. In its early years there was hardly a man or a woman who came to teach in it who did not have the same motive impelling him which prompted its founders to sacrifice for it. The story of the heroism of the members of the faculty in those early days will probably never be written, but there are some who know and honor the men and the women who willingly and uncomplainingly went without the things they needed for the gratification of their personal tastes, and even for their physical comfort, that the college might be saved and live on to fulfil its great mission. And as the time of the idle rich student has fortunately not yet arrived in Colorado College, so neither has the time yet come of that type of teacher who considers his classroom work a necessary evil and hurries through it with scant attention that he may return to the pursuit of his personal ends of scholarship or research. The institution believes in the *college* ideal, that the supreme aim of the college is to mold men, and that the teacher who is false to this aim is not worthy of a place within it.

Some of the curriculum work of Colorado College has had a close relation to the religious life of the students, notably the work in philosophy. A greater amount in this field is required than is the case in most institutions, fourteen semester hours of credit, or nearly a half-year's work in all. Other courses in the same department have a definite bearing upon the religious thinking of the students. Much of this work is under the personal direction of President Slocum, and through it he has been able to exert a large influence upon student thought and character.

The college in its early years required as a part of its curriculum a certain amount of Bible-study. But for many years now it has been its policy to make such work elective in the belief that thereby better results could be attained. The courses have been broad and modern, yet constructive, and have helped the students to

retain and strengthen their hold on the realities of Christian faith.

The religious life of the college expresses itself in worship through the chapel exercises, conducted every morning except Saturday and Sunday, and through the Sunday afternoon vesper service, established during the present year. Attendance upon the former is required—a custom which the students would refuse to give up if it were left to them to decide, for “chapel” is a center of college unity as well as a devotional service. The vesper service is voluntary, but has on the whole been well attended. It is the wish of the college that the students as far as possible come into close relations with the city churches, but the college life is so much a unit in itself and so full of its activities that it has been increasingly difficult to link the young people to the city religious organizations. More and more stress is likely to be put upon the religious life within the institution as the college grows larger and more complex.

The student religious work is organized with the usual Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. The young men’s work is under the direction of a full-time paid secretary. It has been developed along the customary lines, with valuable extension work in the small communities lying about Colorado Springs. While this varied activity is exceedingly valuable, those most deeply interested in it feel that the college Y.M.C.A. has not yet satisfactorily met the religious situation among the men. It has not succeeded in influencing deeply the whole group. A broader work remains to be done which calls for the wisest leadership.

The young women have had during only one year, and that several years ago, a paid secretary. The college receives no young woman as a student from out of town except to its own dormitories, unless she enters the home of relatives or that of close and responsible friends. The life of the young women is therefore closely unified, and is so compact that it does not require the kind of leadership that the Y.M.C.A. must have. The Y.W.C.A. work has been quiet but effective, and a large number have gone out from it to fields of Christian service. It has more thoroughly and effectively leavened the life of the young women than the other association has succeeded in influencing the young men.

The test of the religious life of any college is at least in part the number of those who go out from it to take up religious work of various types in various fields. The record of Colorado College is comprehended, as far as figures can tell it, in the following statistics. Including the class of 1911, the total number of graduates living and dead, is 578, of whom 291 are men and 287 women. The large majority of these have been graduated in recent years, for during the first sixteen years of its history, the college graduated only six, and during the first twenty-one years only twenty-three. Of these 578 graduates:

	Total
18 are in the Christian ministry and 4 are studying for it . . . . .	22
13 are general missionaries, or missionary teachers abroad and 2 at home	15
3 are medical missionaries, and 4 are studying for this work . . . . .	7
3 are in Y.M.C.A. work abroad and 2 at home . . . . .	5
7 are in Y.W.C.A. work at home and 1 abroad . . . . .	8
2 are in settlement work . . . . .	2
	<hr/> 59

Closely allied with work that is definitely religious is the profession of the teacher. A large proportion of those who are in this work enter it from the same motive that impels the minister or the missionary. This field of effort has proved especially attractive to the Colorado College graduate. A total of 188, 51 men and 137 women, are engaged in it, nearly one-third of the whole body of graduates. This number is nearly four times as many as have gone into business (48), or law (48), or engineering (49), and nearly ten times as many as have taken up the practice of medicine at home (19). The total of those who have gone into teaching and distinctively religious work is nearly 247, or nearly 43 per cent of the graduates of the college.

The fact that so many of the graduates of the college are grouped in these occupations which are recognized as opportunities for service is not accidental. From the beginning the note of service has always been sounded in the college life and in the lives and characters of those who have led in it. The college has given this definite inspiration to its students, and about nothing is it so thankful and proud as that so many of those who have gone out from it are doing their best to help in a world of human need.

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE  
A CONSTRUCTIVE STUDY  
III. AN EXAMINATION OF CONSTITUENT TERMS OF THE  
DOCTRINE

---

PROFESSOR HERBERT ALDEN YOUTZ, PH.D.  
Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N.Y.

---

We have pointed out in previous papers that a reasonable approach to our problem involves a somewhat radical adjustment in the matter of presuppositions and general conception of thought-method. Traditional discussions have preserved a sort of unity by overlooking the ambiguity of certain terms involved; or, more exactly said, they have rested in the unity of language, instead of making a critical examination of the conceptions behind the language. A false simplicity is introduced into the problem when the surface generalizations or abstract universals of speech are allowed to take the place of analysis of the concrete facts of life. Words, like all symbols, depend for their potency upon our ability to interpret the thing symbolized. A species of literalism always threatens to make exegesis the exegesis of words rather than of meaning.

In coming now to closer quarters with the discussion, two preliminary considerations challenge our attention, since they constitute the ground of a good deal of the confusion which surrounds the subject. First: What makes this or any other doctrine Christian? What differentiates a Christian doctrine from any other? Second: If the subject of a future life is not a matter to be deduced and established by intellectual methods nor yet to be turned over to natural science, how shall we so handle this alleged reality as to justify its position among our instinctive and reasoned beliefs? These matters are both presuppositions to be determined before an unambiguous account of doctrine can be offered.

1. The first question concerns itself with the relationship of Christian doctrine to Christ. In asking for the *Christian* doctrine

of a future life, we imply some standard or method of verification which refers us to Christ. What is the nature of this implied reference to Christ? What is the "Christian" standard of doctrine? The question is the more importunate since we have insisted that a Christian doctrine is a developing fact, and not a constant quantity. If we cannot quote Jesus' words as outlining a final form of doctrine, and if we cannot regard the spiritual truth which he revealed as items of divine—and therefore unchangeable—truth, then what is the mark of a Christian doctrine; or what constitutes a conception of truth as "Christian," as distinguished from the non-Christian or un-Christian? That this phase of the problem has been and still is a divisive factor among interpreters is evidenced by the efforts that are made to standardize the doctrine either by reference to the Bible, to the church, or to Jesus' words. If we set aside all these external standards, what is the reasonable mark of a "Christian" standard of belief?

That Jesus is the highest revelation of God, the highest and most convincing evidence of the truth of God's love and of all spiritual verity, is beyond question for the Christian interpreter of the world. To make this fact identical with a metaphysical view of Christ's person and then to proceed on the assumption that we have some perfect body of doctrine or some infallible source of doctrine, is to do violence to the conception of knowledge which holds men's confidence today. The older Christologies and the older conceptions of the divinity of Christ were wrapped up with a realistic, metaphysical conception of Christ in which "divinity" and "humanity" showed a definite cleavage in the one person.<sup>1</sup> Christological doctrines undertook to outline this frontier district. With such a realistic distinction between "divinity" and "humanity," the burden of the problem of knowledge was to find out that which in Jesus' life and words was divine. It was parallel to the historic search in the Roman Catholic church for the *ex-cathedra* utterances of the pope. The distinction ends always in a confusion

<sup>1</sup> This distinction has been, of course, but an aspect of a world-view that could think all reality in terms of a "natural" and a "supernatural" order, only one of which expressed either the "grace" or the presence of God. This distinction is yet implicit in most orthodox theology.



of the conception of knowledge itself, if not in the confounding of the moral perceptions.

On the other hand, the modern "Christian" doctrine of a future life has no such absolute, guaranteed source of doctrine. We do not believe that we can isolate the quantity "divinity" in Jesus' personality and operate with this fact as our authoritative norm of truth. Modern exegetes are not searching the consciousness of Jesus to discover his *ex-cathedra* utterances. Rather, we must be true to our best conceptions of knowledge and our best conceptions of personality, *just as the early theologians were.*<sup>2</sup> This still leaves us facing the man Christ Jesus, historically the greatest stimulator and creator of belief in immortality, and the supreme purifier and vitalizer of that faith as a factor in spiritual living.

We have no interest in the christological problem here except to insist that no dogma about Christ will be convincing to our generation unless it is faithful to our best psychological and epistemological convictions. Jesus revealed God and spoke with authority for God. The fact is one of religious experience and history: the mode of conceiving the fact is a matter of critical scientific inquiry. The divine purpose and meaning and love are made clear to anyone who rules his life in complete fidelity to Jesus' spirit. The divine revelation, the divine guidance, the divine love will always be confident facts to the one who "follows" Jesus whithersoever he goeth. But the whole matter must be thought in terms of a spiritual insight and a spiritual response which a realistic philosophy cannot adequately construe. The problem of modern Christologies is to restate in spiritual terms the spiritual facts about Jesus which have never been seriously questioned, which have powerfully influenced the world's life, and which give every evidence of their permanent worth and authority for life. How God could express himself authoritatively through a human life is a problem with many mysteries. But the terms of the problem thus stated bring reality into our thinking, if they

<sup>2</sup> It cannot too often be pointed out that the earlier thinkers, just as the later thinkers must do, got their high sense of divine revelation and their keen insight into spiritual truth by being faithful to the best thought-forms of their age.

do not solve all mysteries. It leaves us to believe that the mystery of spiritual relationships exemplified in Jesus—whether it touches problems of inner experience or of knowledge—is commensurate with our human relationships. The truth as it is in Christ Jesus is our familiar truth come to its most radiant growth and expression in the supreme human person. The relation of the divine and the human in Jesus is really no more a soluble problem in the case of Jesus' person than in the case of any other person to one who holds that in the divine we all live and move and have our being.

Leaving out then all arbitrary constants alleged as unique "Christian" contributions to the problem of a future life, our inquiry reduces to such forms as the following: "What was Jesus' attitude toward a future life?" "What may be reasonably inferred as implicit in his words, and especially in his life?" "What does our best spiritual living and our best spiritual thinking yield under the inspiration and guidance of the impulses that come from Christ?" In short, "the Christian doctrine of a future life" is in the end the doctrine which best expresses the insight and convictions of those men and women whose lives have been shaped by the historical forms of Christian faith and teaching. For when we cease to think of the doctrine as a piece of information or a constant fact, we pass on through the forms of inquiry cited above and find the best Christian form of faith to be that which is produced by the spirit of Christ working faithfully in historic men and women conditioned by the rational and spiritual atmosphere of their times. The best Christian consciousness is the best expression of the spirit of Christ that we know. Therefore we cannot appeal from this consciousness without appealing from the spirit of Christ to some arbitrary standard. That consciousness which has been produced by the leadership of Jesus—have we a more authoritative ultimate of spiritual guidance for either faith or practice?

We cannot answer our question, then, without the gospel facts of Jesus Christ and his teaching. Neither can we answer it without regard to the processes of history by which the life and convictions of the Christian church have been shaped. For through

these, too, we know Christ. Much less can we solve it without faithful regard to the forms which the spirit of Christ must take when it is dealing with the best thinking and willing and doing of our own day. What should a Christian believe about a future life? He may believe what such a spirit as Jesus would believe, living under the conditions of today's life and taught by the spirit of Christ incarnated in the whole history of the church.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus himself would doubtless have characterized as Christian that which expresses in thought or life or act the growth of the spirit with which he leavened life, and which should take the varying historical forms of human life in the whole world. He regarded his spirit and work as "seed" to bring forth fruit, as "leaven" with transforming power. A Christian doctrine will be that account of spiritual reality which best expresses the spirit and ideal of Jesus when reacted upon by the rational climate and soil of a given age. Our doctrine is related to Christ's life and teaching as fruit is related to seed. The best life of today expresses the influence of that leavening, life-creating Spirit. Exalting that Spirit and speaking out of the best knowledge of today, what do we believe about the future life? And why?

To be sure this is to give up all final and arbitrary measurements of a Christian doctrine of a future life. But it seems to us to offer a reasonable unity in place of the traditional insistence upon uniformity of doctrine.

2. Our other preliminary question has to do with the nature of the reality affirmed as "future life." Life is such a general term that it offers innumerable lurking-places for ambiguities and contradictions and confusions. Generically speaking, every form of existence is a form of life. But no Christian doctrine of a future life teaches the prolonging of all the forms of life that we know. Then, for what form of life or reality does the Christian affirm immortality? If we make the familiar answer that "the spirit is immortal," we run the risk of losing our audience or of putting them to sleep. For "spirit" is very often thought of as a modern equivalent for "non-being" or for some featureless, characterless attenuated existence that nobody cares about.

<sup>3</sup> This is the truth which traditional doctrine has cherished as "the holy Spirit working in the church."

To make the matter appear in a more concrete and reasonable light as well as a more interesting light, we offer a comment on the variety of things which we classify as "real" and the variety of tests which we make of "reality."

For example, the reality of the material world is not questioned by sane people. To be sure, speculative motives have led certain people to declare that the material is non-existent. But practically and actually all sane people take into account the material world and its laws. It is real to them. And the ground or basis of this acceptance of the material as real is in what we call experience. In the mystery of personal experience our lives grasp the reality of the material world as a form of existence with which we must reckon. We do not make it, but find it. We cannot banish it nor annihilate it; neither can we go back of the mysterious fact of experience to establish its reality. Its reality consists in the fact that normal experience presents it to us and we cannot exorcise it from experience. We accept the report of experience.

It is easy to overlook this fact that the reality of matter for us is dependent upon the reality of experience, and that the validity of our tests of material reality point directly back to that prior reality—the experience of our own consciousness. Naïve thinking and shallow thinking may come to regard the material world as existing in its own right. But a reasonable analysis of our grasp of the material shows that our human form of experience is the condition of affirming even a concrete material world. Thus experience is an absolute condition of knowledge. Our chief motive in this epistemological analysis is to show that experience, our own forms of consciousness, are back of all the realities we affirm, and all realities come back to experience to be tested. Should anyone challenge this reality, we could only lead him to the experience. Moreover, in the concrete work of the scientist, and in all practical work with the material world, the approach is from the standpoint of the world as experienced. The scientific man accepts the world as experienced, and this constitutes reality for him. The real world is the empirical world. There is no attempt to construct or prove any form of reality. It would

reverse the whole familiar process of science to demand some independent "proof" of the reality of the alleged facts before dealing with them. But the facts of experience are the solid grounds of his confidence. Thus throughout the material world as men deal with it. They are hampered by no questionings as to its reality and no necessity of looking behind the facts of experience to find a more solid basis.

But experience is a very complex matter, and leads us to affirm a variety of kinds of reality. At the risk of being tedious we may point out that the thinker dealing with the world of ideas affirms the reality and validity of his thought-world solely on the basis of experience. In a fundamental sense he does precisely as he does when he deals with the material world: in each case experience presents this form of reality, and he deals with it because he must. He does not make this form of experience, but as it arises and presents him with this form of consciousness he accepts it and trusts it. He finds himself living in a thought-world, and with no ability to prove its reality he trusts it as a real and valid form of experience. And in being faithful to experience—in acting as though things and thoughts were real—he establishes the reality of both and verifies his beliefs. The alternative is absolute skepticism; and absolute skepticism is essentially unreason or insanity.

In the mystery of personal consciousness a man has experiences of personal relationships, moral experiences, experiences of contact with unseen forces, and above all the experience of achieving or forfeiting character in a dramatic dealing with the world which conditions him. Some of the facts are visible, many are invisible and unpicturable, but his reaction over against the sum of them constitutes a real world of experience and ultimates in the establishing or deterioration of what we call character. And character itself may become the most real and vital fact for him, owing to the emphasis which he puts upon that particular sort of experience. This aspect of experience is commonly called spiritual.

Now this brief analysis is offered to suggest two or three important things. First, all reality must find its justification in the forms of experience which we cannot renounce and back of which we cannot go. Second, our conceptions of reality may be as

manifold and varied as our complex experience itself. No one form of experience has a monopoly in guiding us to reality. Incidentally, we note that material reality is no more entitled by the analysis to be given superior standing than any other. Third, experience being the ground and beginning of our apprehension of reality, the method of dealing with reality in any realm should be that which is faithful to our best forms of experience. Our tests and verifications must be appropriate to the facts involved. Nothing will discredit our account of reality if it is faithful to persistent and universal facts of human experience. For these are the ultimates of our human knowledge of the world.

Now by common consent the race grades its experiences, and sets aside some as higher and better in the scale of value. These higher experiences are conditioned upon the response of our own voluntary activities, the assent of our wills. The moral element as the highest expression of our intelligence runs through it all and gives it a distinctive quality which sets it apart in the scale of worth. These higher human experiences where personality deals with personality in terms of intimate and refined relationships which we term social and moral constitute the reality of the so-called spiritual. The spiritual world is the common world of spiritual experience where men and women enter into ethical relationships, acknowledge moral obligations, feel the glow of the moral passion, are controlled by moral laws, enact the moral drama of personal existence, and strive for the achievements of personal life. But while the marks of the spiritual clearly distinguish it from the material world and even from the world of ideas, it is to be noted that the reality and validity of the spiritual, no less than that of the material, is grounded in personal experience.

This long excursus may be justified by the fact that the *Christian* doctrine of a future life has solely to do with spiritual reality; and this reality has sometimes been questioned or at least depreciated. Material considerations and intellectual considerations have been introduced with the benevolent aim of giving it stronger standing. But until one sees the really spiritual center of the problem the arguments adduced from natural and logical sources are likely to defeat their aim. Even psychological experimentation

and the best insight of practical philosophy, though important in criticizing and shaping the form of our beliefs, are yet subordinate to the original insight which spiritual experience establishes.

3. The supreme interest of Jesus was with the spiritual world—the world of reality constituted of the higher personal relationships and values of life—where righteousness and character and love are the supreme ideals. His comprehensive ideal was a kingdom of Heaven where a living God enters into the relationship of Father to his children, and where all men and women respond as loving children and thus as affectionate brethren. Justice and gentleness and peace and good-will and goodness and blessedness were native aspects of this spiritual kingdom. He himself lived in terms of these things. They were his meat and drink. He called men to a like spiritual experience. For the experience of these things made spiritual things his great reality. He did not argue or summon logic to establish the reality of the spiritual. But always he assumed the power of the spiritual to compel assent to its reality if men would “enter into life”—enter into the experience of those higher realities. From the vantage-point of the experience itself, argument becomes weak, and the other realities sink into the background, unworthy of our best efforts. On the other hand, a man lost in this world’s goods—the lower forms of reality—was spiritually lost, since no argument could awaken him except the appeal of the spiritual to his experience. To be dead in sin was to be insensible to the appeal of the spiritual. It was because Jesus saw the world and life from the standpoint of the highest realities and accepted with unquestioning confidence the truth which his experience yielded that he has become our spiritual master and teacher. Because Jesus, supremely, brings the spiritual to the consciousness of men *with compelling reality*, he is the Savior of mankind. He speaks as one having authority. And the doctrine of immortality to which he gave such strong emphasis grows always out of the best experiences of the race. Its evidence and its essence alike grow out of spiritual reality. It is a spiritual fact to be spiritually discerned.

The Christian doctrine of a future life, then, is not touched by materialistic considerations. The practical materialist will see

nothing in it—just as he sees nothing in Him who brought immortality to light. Neither can intellectualism add to the strength of a vital faith, nor understand the vital argument of spiritual belief. The empirical element which alone brings reality into our explanations is wanting. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."<sup>4</sup> When the apostle added, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man," may it not be that he thus expressed the access to reality which a spiritual experience brings, and the validity of the spiritual judgment founded upon an experience as valid as that of the "natural man" pronouncing upon "natural" matters?

One more consideration should be touched upon here. Religion moves chiefly in the realm of the spiritual. Jesus not only spoke with the confidence of one who spoke out of an intimate experience of spiritual reality, but he professed to speak for God. The guidance and control he acknowledged to be nothing less than divine guidance. The ideal for which he worked was the divine ideal.<sup>5</sup> He was "one with the Father" in the whole spirit and endeavor of his life, and he taught that this union with the divine is a characteristic of all who are spiritually "alive."

True religion is at home only in that form of experience which we have described as spiritual. The reality to which spiritual experience gives us access includes the great spiritual Fact, the Living God. "God is spirit," taught Jesus. This means not that he is unreal. But it means that his reality consists in the highest that we know and not the lowest, and that we can know him only in terms of our highest reality—spiritual experience. The highest moral law and the highest divine law we know as one. The two great commandments are reciprocal aspects of the one fact, spiritual experience.

We are chiefly concerned here to note that under the guidance of the supreme spiritual person we inevitably receive the highest

<sup>4</sup> I Cor. 2:14.

<sup>5</sup> E.g., "I do the works of my Father," "The words that I speak I speak not of myself, but my Father," etc.



revelation of God. The utterance of the supreme spiritual experience in touch with the highest form of reality has the sanction of the divine—it is indeed the voice of the divine speaking with the highest authority we can know.

In studying the Christian doctrine of a future life, then, we come to the record of Jesus, believing that he supremely among men spoke out of contact with spiritual reality, and thus gave us our supreme revelation of divine truth. But since this spiritual vision is not a tableau nor a magical, once-given glimpse, but a living experience to be ever repeated, we must apprehend it by achieving Jesus' contact with spiritual reality. And since it is a personal and elastic experience, we seek for no rule or pattern in Jesus, but for the inspiration of his spirit. This must be known, not only through the Bible record, but in the history of the church, in which that spirit has lived among the variable forms of developing society. We must heed the admonition to "search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."<sup>6</sup> But reverently believing that the same spirit has animated the best life and the best men of the historic church of Christ, we interpret the Scriptures in the light of the later history. For we do not regard Jesus as a superhuman prodigy, nor as an infallible oracle. He is moral personality at its best, bringing to us the glory of God and the revelation of God, thus disclosing the presence of God in our human life. To grasp this viewpoint is to gain a right angle of vision for regarding the Christian doctrine of a future life.

<sup>6</sup> John 5:39.

## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

---

In May of the present year, probably between three and four hundred young men graduated from the many theological seminaries scattered throughout the country. In 1911 as many more, and so on, back for five years. Few men leaving a theological seminary go to fields of activity from which they receive large salaries. Many well-equipped men start with salaries far below the average in other professions. Naturally, the fields to which such men are called are frequently in small towns, and it is therefore inevitable that they are not within reach of good public library facilities. The student in the best seminaries learns to work with books. He has at his command everything which is helpful in the way of reference books and books inspirational, both historical and literary. Planted in a new, small, unprogressive field, without books and without contact with people who are interested in his own subject, what wonder is it that he frequently loses his vim, preaches dull, uninteresting, and superficial sermons, and sometimes settles down into habits which result in his becoming a mediocre preacher for life?

The American Institute of Sacred Literature has been working upon this problem of keeping the busy, perhaps isolated minister up to the best standard of efficiency for many years. Readers of the *Biblical World* are familiar with these plans, and need only to be made acquainted with new work for the coming year. Four subjects will be emphasized for professional reading courses in 1912-13. Two of these will be conducted through the pages of the *Biblical World*. The first course, commencing in October, will treat the "Apostolic Age in the Light of Modern Scholarship." The full list of books and first reviews will appear in the October number of the *Biblical World*, and will continue through four months, ending with January. The second course will form an admirable succession with the first, its subject being "The Expansion of Christianity in the Twentieth Century." This course will be conducted by Professor Ernest D. Burton, of the University of Chicago. No phase of modern history is more interesting than the marvelous growth of Christianity in the present century both in territory and in effectiveness. Professor Burton is fresh from a personal investigation of conditions in oriental countries, and will bring to his survey not only all the books in this course, but much that will represent a personal contribution to the

subject. This course will appear in the *Biblical World* from February to June, leaving the summer months for a vacation period, as in the present year.

In addition to the new courses, emphasis will also be placed upon the courses which were current in the *Biblical World* for 1911-12: "The Character of Jesus in the Light of Modern Scholarship," under the leadership of Professor S. J. Case; and "The Efficient Church," directed by Professor Shailer Mathews. The reviews which appeared in the *Biblical World* have been placed in permanent pamphlet form, and will be furnished to all members of the reading guild for fifty cents in addition to the regular membership fee, which is identical with a subscription to the *Biblical World*. This charge of fifty cents will be remitted in the case of those who use the loan libraries on this subject, paying therefor the fee of \$3.50. Libraries were last year shipped to remote portions of Canada on the north, and as far south as the Gulf of Mexico; westward to California, and eastward to the Atlantic ocean. The attractiveness of the books is evidenced by the fact that few libraries were returned complete. The privilege of purchasing books after reading them tempted nearly every reader to keep for his own library a portion, if not all, of the books. It will be seen, therefore, that the plan is not only providing the highest type of professional reading-matter for the minister, but that the libraries of these men are being gradually built up and replenished with helpful books of permanent value.

But the problem of his own intellectual and spiritual progress is not the only one which confronts the minister. Not only in churches in remote fields, but in every church, there is the necessity of leading at least portions of the congregation into better methods of biblical study and interpretation. Here, also, the Institute has been doing its work for many years. Its outline Bible study courses have reached literally hundreds of thousands. The secretary of the Institute, in traveling about the country, seldom finds a town, or even a church, where there is not some person who has come into personal touch with the Institute through one of these Bible courses.

In the columns of the *Biblical World* will appear, commencing with October 1, special suggestions and helps for those leaders who desire to teach through the use of the outline courses, either the "Life of Christ," or that most interesting subject, the "Foreshadowings of the Christ." These are not newly prepared courses, but have already stood the test of years of use. They are thoroughly modern in spirit and in matter. The former was prepared by Professor Ernest D. Burton

and the latter represents the position which President William R. Harper took on the question of messianic prophecy, having been prepared by him some twelve years ago. It is a position, which, while not perhaps meeting fully the demands of the most advanced historical criticism in some details, appeals most acceptably to that large body of people which is just coming into possession of the historical spirit and method in Old Testament study. Full library references will accompany each series of suggestions, as well as lists of topics for discussion at class meetings.

Many subscribers to the *Biblical World* would be glad, during the coming year, for special reasons to use the outline courses, for which suggestions for leaders appear in the *Biblical World* for 1911-12. These suggestions have been printed in pamphlet form, and a copy will be given free of charge to the leader of any club in either the "Social and Ethical Teaching of Jesus," by Professor Shailer Mathews, or the "Origin and Religious Teaching of the Old Testament Books," by Georgia L. Chamberlin.

To any leader of a class, a copy of the course book which is chosen is sent free of charge upon receipt of his first class list. The fact will not be overlooked that the courses particularly mentioned in this announcement are not the only ones available through the American Institute. In addition to the professional reading courses herein named, there are fifteen upon other subjects, which can be secured upon application, and six other outline courses. Among the latter, those who read the professional course on the "Apostolic Age," may wish to use the outline study course on the "Founding of the Christian Church," since by using this course with a class, economy of time would be effected in the reading of reference books. Those who are intending to organize classes for Bible students or to apply for libraries in connection with the professional reading courses should report as soon as convenient to the office of the Institute at the University of Chicago, with requests for literature to assist them in creating an interest in the work.

## Current Opinion

---

### THE SPRINGFIELD TRAINING SCHOOL INQUIRY

It has been an element of great strength in the Young Men's Christian Association that it has held aloof to a great extent from theological controversy, accepting men on the basis of their church standing. The development of strong training schools, however, with large equipment and college rank has inevitably raised a question as to the type of theological teaching that should be given. It is impossible to carry on biblical instruction without meeting the questions of inspiration, inerrancy, historicity, etc.

The training school at Springfield, Mass., a largely endowed and well-equipped college, has in the person of Dr. Ballantine a biblical instructor of thorough scholarship and high ability. It is only natural that he has introduced his students to scientific methods of study. Inaccurate and misleading reports of his classroom work having got abroad, a good deal of uneasiness was manifest in the Brotherhood, and not a little criticism was leveled against the school. The Board of Trustees therefore appointed a committee of investigation, of which Dr. Thomas M. Balliet, dean of the school of Pedagogy in New York University, was chairman, and of which Dean Hodges of Cambridge was a member. The committee has recently made a unanimous report that "the biblical instruction of the school is deserving not only of exoneration from criticism, but of the highest praise."

The investigation was a very interesting one. On the one hand the sources of the criticisms were discovered. Certain Association secretaries were disturbed because the alumni of the school seemed to be holding divergent views from their own upon the atonement and verbal inspiration, and because they were more interested in social religious endeavors than in revivalism. Some thought the graduates of the school lacking in personal piety. Most of this is found to be misunderstanding.

The committee thought it wise to discover the previous religious training of the students and so addressed to the alumni some questions, very elementary from a critical point of view. Some of the questions with the answers were as follows:

"3. Did you regard the Garden of Eden as historic fact?"

To this 70 answered "yes," 49 "no," 29 were uncertain.

"6. Did you regard the account of the Tower of Babel as historic fact?"

To this 60 answered "yes," 33 "no," 49 were uncertain.

"8. Did you regard the story of Jonah as historic fact?"

To this 45 answered "yes," 76 "no," 27 were uncertain.

It was inevitable that the most moderate views of biblical scholarship would lead to a considerable readjustment of view for such students. One man stated as his experience: "Without knowing anything about the facts, I believed the Bible to be actually and literally God's word. I was brought up under the influence of men who believed in verbal inspiration. When the professor told us that there were no original manuscripts in existence, and that there were various readings of the same passages, the props were all taken out from under me, and I was led to question the authenticity of the Bible, and even the reality of God. I lost my faith completely, and for nearly a year I floundered about in a sea of perplexity." He adds that he has recovered his faith and is perfectly satisfied with the method of instruction in the school. Of all the men questioned, 114 stated that their faith had been strengthened, several said that they had experienced no change, a few said that their faith had been weakened, notably, some who had not completed the course. The committee report that the well-nigh unanimous testimony of the alumni is an enthusiastic indorsement of the instruction of the school.

The committee after thorough consideration pronounce the biblical instruction "in harmony with that of the theological seminaries of the evangelical churches." This is a most happy conclusion of a troublesome question, and it is to be hoped that it will be satisfactory to the Association at large and avert any lamentable theological controversy.

## Work and Workers

---

THE NEED of a more modern translation of the New Testament than that now in use in the Church of England is being felt by some scholarly members of that church and the preparation of such a translation is contemplated. As a preliminary to it, a translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews along the lines proposed is being made as an experiment. The developments of this enterprise will be followed with interest by American students of the New Testament.

THE SOCIETY FOR BIBLICAL STUDY, which represents the best scholarship of England, in an effort to spread the popular study of the Bible, has offered the Burkitt bronze medal for 1913 and 1914 to the writers of the best essays upon "The Maccabee Period in Its Relation to the Apocalyptic Hope," and "St. Paul and the Mysteries." Essays upon the former subject must reach the secretary, Mr. F. C. Cook, Laleham Road, High Welwyn, England, before April 1, 1913, and on the latter subject before April 1, 1914. It is understood that American students may also compete for the medal. The essays are not intended to be the work of mature scholars, but of advanced students in the New Testament field.

GEORGE DE WITT CASTOR, professor of New Testament literature in Pacific Theological Seminary, Berkeley, Cal., was drowned, on July 14, 1912. His death removes one of the most promising of younger American New Testament scholars, and will be mourned by a wide circle of friends. Mr. Castor graduated from Yale Divinity School in 1904 and after spending the year 1906-7 at the universities of Marburg and Berlin, took the degree of Ph.D. at Yale University in 1907. Since that time he has been professor at Berkeley. He has been a contributor to the *Biblical World* and the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and has collaborated with Professor Charles F. Kent on some of his his Old Testament books.

DR. CARL CLEMEN of the University of Bonn has just issued a large and important work entitled *Die Entstehung des Johannesevangeliums*. Professor Clemen is known to American scholars by the lectures which he gave at several universities in the winter of 1908-9. His discussion

of the Fourth Gospel is a timely contribution to the study of the problem. He concludes that the author of the gospel was a Jew by birth, who belonged, not to the first, but to a later generation of disciples and was a follower of the apostle John whom he highly revered. The gospel was, in its main material, written between 94 and 115 A.D. in or near Ephesus, where the apostle John lived in the latter part of his life, and where he had given his followers much valuable information concerning Jesus. The purpose of the book was in part polemical and in part apologetic.

PROFESSOR R. H. CHARLES, to whom New Testament scholarship is so greatly indebted for many volumes of first importance in the field of Jewish literature contemporary with the New Testament, is about to publish a two-volume work upon the *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*. The Oxford University Press announces this publication and promises that it will appear by the end of the present year. The work is to contain an English translation of all the Jewish writings commonly grouped under these two heads. It will contain about one-third more material than the great edition by Kautzsch. Each of the writings will be given in English translation, with critical apparatus, introduction, and commentary. It is also announced that Professor Charles will soon publish a second edition of his *Book of Enoch*. The translation will be based on the text which Dr. Charles himself published in 1906, and which is exhaustive so far as existing textual materials go. The edition with this and other changes will be an important advance upon his first edition. The Oxford University Press also announces for the near future an edition by Professor Charles of *The Zadokite Fragments*, which Dr. Schechter has recently published.

PROFESSOR BENJAMIN WISNER BACON, whose portrait appears as the frontispiece of this issue of the *Biblical World*, is one of the best-known New Testament scholars of America. His name is also well known abroad. He was a lecturer in the Oxford Summer School of Theology the past summer, and he also delivered an address at the Leiden Congress. A year ago he was honored with a degree at Breslau in connection with the two-hundredth anniversary of that university. Two years ago he was one of the Americans to speak at the Fünfter Weltkongress für freies Christentum und religiösen Fortschritt in Berlin. He has also been a frequent contributor to foreign periodicals, such as the *Expositor*, the *Hibbert Journal*, and the *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*.



Professor Bacon graduated from Yale University in 1881 and from Yale Divinity School in 1884. After completing his divinity studies he spent twelve years in the pastorate where he had already distinguished himself as a scholar before he was called to the chair of New Testament criticism and exegesis in Yale Divinity School in 1896, a position which he still occupies. During his pastorate he translated Wildeboer's *Kanon des ouden Verbonds* and published two important Old Testament studies: *The Genesis of Genesis* and *The Triple Tradition of Exodus*. Since entering upon his professorship at Yale he has worked in the New Testament field, where his numerous and scholarly productions have made him a foremost figure in the theological world. He has been a frequent contributor to the *Biblical World*, the *American Journal of Theology*, the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, and the *Harvard Theological Review*. He is also the author of a number of important books on the New Testament, e.g., *Introduction to the New Testament*, *The Sermon on the Mount*, *The Story of Saint Paul*, *The Beginnings of Gospel Story*, *The Founding of the Church*, *A Commentary on Galatians*, *The Fourth Gospel in Research and Debate*, and *Jesus the Son of God*.

## Book Reviews

### THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS

Those who are apt to be impatient of the controversy about the existence of Jesus sometimes need to be reminded that it is not so arbitrary or capricious as it seems. It is a problem which has been started by the very methods of recent criticism upon the origins of Christology especially in relation to Paulinism. If "liberal" theology emphasizes a pre-Christian eschatology and Christology which Paul employed to make a redeemer out of the Jesus of Nazareth, it was not altogether unnatural for the radical criticism of Drews and Jensen to deduce the non-existence of any such Jesus, either by denying the authenticity of the Pauline letters or by so reading them as to discover no evidence for the existence of an earthly figure behind the speculative theology of the apostle. At the same moment came the movement which modified the supposed historical character of Mark's Gospel. The result was a restatement of the mythical hypothesis, which no longer regarded the gospels as a record of myth gathering round a real figure, but as speculative constructions based partly on older oriental mythology and partly on the Old Testament narratives.

The controversy has blown itself out, and, as is usual in such phases of discussion, it has thrown up one or two books of more than transient value, in which the fundamental issues are presented. Professor Case's volume belongs to this class.<sup>1</sup> He accepts the challenge from the standpoint of liberal theology, and seeks to show that the negative argument will not meet the historical and critical data of the New Testament. The teaching of Jesus, as he points out, requires a historical personality, and the christological speculations of the primitive church are based upon a resurrection-faith which could not have existed apart from a historical founder of the religion. He has some apposite remarks upon the latter point.

Even if we should accept without question—as probably the disciples did—the objective reality of their vision, we should still have to ask why

<sup>1</sup> *The Historicity of Jesus. A Criticism of the Contention That Jesus Never Lived, a Statement of the Evidence for His Existence, an Estimate of His Relation to Christianity.* By Shirley Jackson Case. The University of Chicago Press, 1912. Pp. viii+352. \$1.50.

they connected the heavenly apparition with the historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth. This was not the only course open to them. They might have abandoned Jesus entirely, saying that he had disappointed their expectations, that his claims had been discredited by death, and that God had now shown to them in a vision the true heavenly Messiah for whom they were to wait. This however was not the course they pursued. . . . The fundamental surety of their faith was the conviction that Jesus—Jesus of Nazareth, with whom they had associated in the daily walks of life, he who had inspired that discipleship and whose influence had left its indelible mark upon them—had survived the obliterating stroke of death. Memory of him is inseparably linked with the primitive resurrection faith.

Professor Case makes out a good statement for the position of the liberal theologians against their opponents. So far as the existence of Jesus is concerned, he has not much difficulty in proving his point. It is a moot question, however, if the presuppositions of his argument do not lead to a somewhat richer Christology than he adumbrates in the closing chapter, on Jesus' significance for modern religion; if the two foci of the orbit of Christology are the perfect humanity and the absolute deity of Jesus Christ, the idealization of Jesus, which liberal theology presents, does not seem a particularly adequate expression for the latter. Hence, while Professor Case's book closes the door upon the controversy about the existence of Jesus, it opens a further set of problems about his religious significance which have hardly reached their final statement in the admission that "he is now, as he has always been, the great Savior" by inspiring men to realize in their own lives a genuine experience of God and to live worthily of their highest ideals.

The argument of the book against the Drews school, however, is lucidly and patiently stated. It is not a mere exposure of the errors committed by that school, but an attack upon their strongest points, and, as the subtitle indicates, a positive survey of the evidence which will command respect for its fairness and completeness. It is written for the use of non-experts, and it is sure to be of service in quarters where confident assertions about the unhistoricity of Jesus have made any impression on the popular mind. But scholars will also find the book of use. It is an appeal to the laity, and at the same time full of suggestion, especially in the latter half, for theologians, whether they agree with it or not.

JAMES MOFFATT

MANSFIELD COLLEGE  
OXFORD, ENGLAND

A NEW COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH<sup>1</sup>

The wealth of the Book of Isaiah will tax commentators until we have a true picture of the life and times of the centuries out of which the work grew. Every student of that unique character will welcome Gray's contribution in the "International Critical Commentary" series. The complete work will require two volumes to be prepared by G. B. Gray and A. S. Peake. The Introduction to the whole book and the commentary on chaps. 1-27 already occupy 573 pages of the available space, or one volume. The second volume will therefore contain chaps. 28-66, Gray being responsible for chaps. 28-39, while Peake will prepare chaps. 40-66.

The Introduction surveys the questions which must enter into any such treatment of the book as the "International Critical Commentary" requires. In the discussion of the Greek version and the prophetic canon, Gray reaches the conclusion that "both in extent and arrangement, the present Hebrew Text and the Greek Version of the Book of Isaiah are substantially identical" (p. xi)—a very comfortable decision for the textual student. The next conclusion is that at the date when the Greek version was made, the Book of Isaiah had already reached its present form and also, with slight differences, its present extent (p. xl). The question then emerges as to when the Greek version of Isaiah was produced. Gray concludes that it probably existed very soon after 150 B.C. (p. xlii), if not even earlier.

Gray's outlines of Isaiah are substantially those given in other commentaries. Three sections are referred to by separate titles: (1) chap. 1; (2) chaps. 2-12; (3) chaps. 13-23. The anonymous prophecy, chaps. 24-27, is followed by a collection of poems, chaps. 28-33, beginning with "woe" (*hōy*), and these by a small section, chaps. 34, 35, difficult to explain either as an interpolation or as related to the preceding chapters.

After summarizing his analysis of the work he says (p. lvii): "We may immediately set aside chaps. 40-66, 24-27, 34 f. as containing no words of Isaiah." Even in chaps. 1-23, we must be careful to distinguish between the work of Isaiah and that of a later date. "The Book of Isaiah is a late compilation: even the books incorporated in it and

<sup>1</sup> *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah*. Chaps. 1-39 by George Buchanan Gray, and chaps. 40-66 by Arthur S. Peake. In two vols.: Vol. I, Introduction and Commentary on chaps. 1-27. New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. ci+472. \$3.00 net.

attributed to Isaiah—chaps. 2-12 and 13-23—are post-exilic works” (p. lxii). The criteria to be used for determining the different writers and the date of any particular passage are mainly of three kinds: (1) political and social implications; (2) style and language; (3) ideas. “In most cases a final judgment on any passage will rest in some measure on criteria of all three classes” (p. lix).

In his survey of the poetical forms of prophetic literature, Gray takes a very sane position, that there is considerable uncertainty or irregularity in Hebrew rhythms or meter. It is rarely wise to insist on any textual emendation simply on rhythmical grounds. This same kind of caution is apparent in all his textual work.

The political and social conditions of Isaiah’s age are surveyed with a fine candor, and a sifting out of the elements which are too hypothetical to challenge the credence of careful students. In the chronological table we note that he gives Hezekiah the dates of 727-698, with the later date in common type in parenthesis.

The body of the Commentary is rich with such textual notes and literary references as mark the author’s careful work on Numbers in this same series. Lack of space will forbid our presenting specimens of the complete method adopted in the exegesis proper. Significant, however, are his views on the dates of the messianic prophecies which are found in this portion of Isaiah. The “royal son” passage in 9:1-6 he locates as does Marti “roughly about 500, not far remote in time from Haggai and Zechariah, both of whom expected a Messiah of the Davidic house” (p. 168). Isa. 11:1-8 was written after 586 B.C., possibly toward the end of the exile, when men’s minds had been placing high hopes on Zerubbabel, of the stock of Jesse, who seems to have drawn men’s attention to himself (p. 214). One more view will be mentioned. The puzzling chaps. 24-27 are said to be “a work of the post-exilic period” (p. 410), and the style of songs and prophecy alike point to “a late post-exilic period” (p. 402).

Students of Isaiah can now sit down and work with the latest word on this wonderful old book. Gray’s work will add to our pleasure if not to our complete satisfaction, for it necessarily leaves many questions to be settled in the future.

IRA MAURICE PRICE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE RELIGION OF ISRAEL UNDER THE KINGDOM<sup>1</sup>

This is a serious piece of work demonstrating how much we may still learn from the great prophets of the eighth century B.C. The author chooses a definite period of Israel's history and seeks to understand its religion. He limits himself to the sources for this period. Beginning with the Pentateuchal writers J and E, he discusses early prophecy, and then takes up Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Deuteronomy. He uses the results of criticism throughout, and if the old reproach that the higher criticism is negative and destructive is ever uttered again, we shall be able to refute it by pointing to this positive and constructive study as a sufficient refutation. My own choice would have been to include Jeremiah in the discussion instead of Deuteronomy. But Deuteronomy doubtless belongs in the period, though it introduces a new stage of religious thought. Perhaps the author will at some future time give us as suggestive a study as this, making Jeremiah the subject.

The period of the kingdom is especially instructive because of the interplay between the religious and secular life of Israel. Our modern separation between church and state is unknown to the ancient world. Religion, in Israel at any rate, was a part of the life of the people, a social phenomenon, and the people never thought of it as something apart from what we call secular interests. The movement which united the tribes of Israel against their foes and made them into a nation was a religious movement. The Pentateuchal narratives were gathered and recorded because the consciousness of Israel's religious unity gave interest to the traditions of Israel's ancestors. "What gave JE the influence it possessed and still possesses is not that which it has in common with other faiths: What caused Israel to preserve the account, and what forms its charm to men still is its simple and direct presentation of certain great religious truths which made Israel what it was, and which it was Israel's glory to hold for the world" (p. 6).

From this point of view J and E belong in the group of prophetic writers. In one important respect, however, they differ from the great prophets whose words have come down to us. They (J and E) are apparently satisfied with the popular religion and dwell lovingly on its authentication by the forefathers. The prophets, on the other hand, protest against the ritual, and in the name of Yahweh himself denounce

<sup>1</sup> *The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom.* The Kerr Lectures delivered in the United Free Church College, Glasgow, during Session 1911-12. By Rev. Adam C. Welch, Theol.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912. Large 8vo, pp. xvi+305.

the worship offered to Yahweh. It is this sharp denunciation which unites Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah. And the motive common to the three is the ethical motive—Yahweh requires kindness rather than sacrifice and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offering. The prophet, says our author, "does not speak in the name of a law which has already been recognized, for the difficulty of the situation was that there was no such law which received an equal recognition by all. He speaks in the name of the outraged Jahveh, who is the ultimate guardian of all justice and right" (p. 53).

The illustration of this theme is given in the detailed discussion which follows, one chapter being given to each of the three great prophets. Did space allow, I should be glad to quote at length, but it will be better for the reader to go to the book itself. From the concluding chapter (on Deuteronomy), however, I may venture to cull a sentence or two. The author, of course, accepts the critical theory concerning the date of the book. He says: "The reason why a reform which appealed to the whole people and represented the aims of all religious men in the community could be carried through in Jerusalem is found in the fact that in Judah the alliance, in the sense of community of ideals, between prophecy and priesthood had always been closer than it was in northern Israel" (p. 193). He goes on to show that this community of ideals showed itself in the Deuteronomic adoption of the cultus. The prophets in their opposition to the ritual had failed to realize that some form of worship is essential to the common man. The Deuteronomists are not willing to break the historic continuity expressed in the popular religion. They desire to remold the national institutions in order to make these the worthy means by which men may express their sense of the will and nature of their God. While therefore Deuteronomy represents a compromise in which the ideals of the prophets lose something of their loftiness, yet the compromise was a necessity if the aims of the prophets were to be even partially realized.

In a few instances the reader will question whether the author has not read into his sources more than they actually contain, but on the whole he will find here an illuminating and instructive discussion.

HENRY PRESERVED SMITH

MEADVILLE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL  
MEADVILLE, PA.

## New Literature

The most important books listed in these columns will receive notice in the book-review pages.

### RELATED SUBJECTS

#### BOOKS

BURN, A. E. *The Athanasian Creed.* (Oxford Church Text Books.) New York: E. S. Gorham, 1912. Pp. 114. 1s. net.

A careful discussion of the origin and meaning of the so-called Athanasian Creed by a scholarly English churchman.

STRONG, AUGUSTUS HOPKINS. *Miscellanies.* Vol. I, Chiefly Historical. Vol. II, Chiefly Essays and Seminary Anniversary Addresses. Philadelphia: Griffith & Rowland Press, 1912. Pp. 493, 504. \$2.00.

These attractive volumes gather up Dr. Strong's principal sermons, essays, and addresses, and evidence the variety of his intellectual interests.

GEM, S. HARVEY. *An Anglo-Saxon Abbot. Aelfric of Eynsham, A Study.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912. Pp. xvi + 200.

Sketches of Aelfric's thought and times, with excerpts from his works.

GUNSAULUS, FRANK W. *The Minister and the Spiritual Life* (Yale Lectures on Preaching, 1911). New York: Revell, 1911. Pp. 396. \$1.25.

Dr. Gunsaulus' large gifts and broad sympathies characterize these lectures delivered before the Yale Divinity School.

BRADFORD, AMORY H. *Preludes and Interludes.* New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1911. Pp. 107. \$1.00.

These concise religious messages from the last months of Dr. Bradford's ministry are marked by his well-known religious insight and literary skill.

WOLCOTT, THERESA H. *Five Hundred Ways to Help Your Church.* Philadelphia: Sunday School Times Co., 1911. Pp. 364. \$1.00 net.

Practical hints for the social life of the church.

SPIELER, G. *Papers on Inter-racial Problems Communicated to the First Universal Races Congress Held at the University of London, July 26-29, 1911.* Edited for the Congress. Published for the World Peace Foundation. Ginn & Co., 1911. Boston: Pp. 530. \$2.40 postpaid.

These scholarly papers are of interest to students of the peace movement and of missions.

BROWN, ARTHUR JUDSON. *The Chinese Revolution.* New York: Student Volunteer Movement, 1912. Pp. 217.

An intelligent sketch of the recent revolutionary movement, by the author of *New Forces in Old China.*

SPEER, ROBERT E. *South American Problems.* New York: Student Volunteer Movement, 1912. Pp. xiii + 270. With map and illustrations.

Social and religious conditions in the several states of South America are tellingly sketched in this volume, which should be widely read.







PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHMOND HENDERSON, PH.D., D.D.

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

---

VOLUME XL

OCTOBER, 1912

---

NUMBER 4

## Editorial

---

### THE CHURCH A PERMANENT NEED OF HUMAN SOCIETY

If one should visit a little French village in the Province of Quebec the dominance of the church would at once be manifest. The sacred building occupies the commanding site. The curé is the chief personage of the place. Education is given entirely by the church. All the affairs of life are referred to the spiritual adviser. He determines what physician may be called, advises who shall be chosen as a wife, exercises wide influence in the financial and political concerns of his parish, and at least countenances, when he does not direct, the recreational life of the people.

It is a far cry from such a primitive religious attitude to that of the modern city. Here everything is directed by experts, scientific, economic, professional, and the clergyman at best is but one of many. Here is a multiplicity of institutions, municipal, philanthropic, social, educational, artistic, and the church at best is but one of many. It seems sometimes that the church is being pushed into the background, all her vital activities being taken away. Once the church was practically the whole socializing force: education, philanthropy, the care of the sick, and even amusement were in her hands. Today these can be done better extra-ecclesiastically; not always perhaps in every given case, but more and more as society understands its functions. The training of children for citizenship, the relief of poverty and distress, the scientific care of disease, and the far more important prevention of disease, the community provision for play, sports, recreations, and neighborly sociability—all these are affairs of

the whole community, and properly appeal to all men and women, whether institutionally religious or not.

Indeed, the change has come about not only because the church could not so well discharge these functions, nor because the state learned its obligations, but because the idea of religion has changed. In the great ethical faiths religion has always been essentially personal, yet to the large majority of men it has always been chiefly institutional. One was born to his religion. He belonged to it as to his race and kindred. This idea of religion is rapidly receding. Only the religion that is personal—an experience, an attainment—is accounted of value. And it is open to men, as it was not in the past, to decline to be of any religion at all. For them the church ceases to be of interest as a church, but such of her functions as seem important are to be carried on under secular auspices. Of necessity the men of religion concur in such a desire, and so the great socializing functions cease to be ecclesiastical. It is a notable fact today that wherever the church is forced into large social activities she finds her highest success in turning over those activities to other organizations as soon as they are ready and willing to receive them.

It is quite conceivable that we shall reach so rational an economic system and so just a provision for the injured and the aged, for mothers and orphans, that philanthropy as now interpreted in charity may not be required; that we may so organize the prevention and care of disease that it cannot be the concern of religious people except in the matter of personal interest and sympathy; that we may learn so well the true moral quality of education and secure so fine a type of teacher that very much of the concern of the church for the education of the young will be met; that we may so eliminate public vice and provide so well for recreation that the church will have little to do with this large phase of life. Without indulging in any Utopian dream, it is quite to be expected that we shall proceed so far in the socialization of our humanity that the church will have no need to exercise any of these functions. Will there then be any need for the church? And if the answer be negative, it may be asked further whether there is any need of

the church now for those who have already the social attitude and are busy with earnest humanitarian efforts.

In considering the question thus reduced to its lowest terms it must of course be recognized that we are not asking whether a church would be necessary in a completed human society. Indeed, the apocalyptic seer has already finely answered the question. In that New Jerusalem, whence all evil had vanished and where love was triumphant, there was no need of a temple, for the Lord was the temple. The Real Presence was universal, every act was a sacrament, religion needed no outward manifestation, for all life was religious. That is a vision of society come to perfection, but in any social development that is likely in the present order of life there will be no perfection. We may attain a very large social justice, a wonderful conquest of the ills that affect the human body, an extraordinary skill in helping children to a strong and good maturity, but the spirit will go lusting against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit for many a millennium. Will the church have a place in an evolving society, which is conscious of its responsibilities in the fields which the church has hitherto cultivated with so much zeal? To put it baldly, can the church live when she has nothing but religion to live for?

There is an abiding revolt of the human soul against the self-sufficiency of human powers. We shall not completely conquer human frailty, either physical or moral. We shall not completely and finally achieve justice, and health, and education. And we shall turn with wistful eyes to Powers that are more than ours, and we shall still long to hear a rebuke and a promise, "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." In the faith, the necessary faith, that the world has a Meaning that we have not read, and is upheld by a Force that we do not see, and is guided by a Love that we may feel, lies the permanence of religion in human life. We may substitute science and even philanthropy for religion, but in the disappointment inevitable in both we shall feel the need of God.

But does religion involve a church? Yes, for personal and individual as it is, it is essentially social. The religious spirit

inevitably says, "My Father and your Father, my God and your God." When the religious longing stirs men two or three of them are sure to gather together in the name of religion, expecting so to realize the Supreme Presence. And that would always give us the church again even if it had ever ceased to be. Forms of worship may change. They are varied today from the small gathering of quiet souls to the elaborate celebration of the Eucharist. But the sense of social community in seeking to realize the highest meaning of life will ever bring men together in exercises of piety.

Amid our rightly insistent demands for justice, equal opportunity for all men, we sometimes forget that one of the abiding needs of humanity is comfort. And it always will be. Many of the troubles that now make us needy may be taken away, but not all of them. There will still be baffled souls who have tried and been defeated. There will be the weak who long for strength. There will be the strong, who have battled nobly and found only ingratitude and disappointment. And there will be sickness and death. We shall always need the Comforter. We are striving for health, attainment, prosperity, and doubtless that is well, but we shall not get all we want. Men may sneer at this aspect of religion as feminine, but the world will always need the mother. The church will ever have a place as she proclaims, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will the Lord comfort you."

But religion is more than the sense of dependence: it is ethical passion. And we shall have no evolving human society in which the strong demand for righteousness will not be necessary. We may come to ever finer economic justice, but we shall develop ever subtler selfishnesses. We shall always need the prophetic voice to stir our souls and the courageous hand to tear aside our masks. It is idle to think of a day in which the preaching of righteousness will not be necessary. Every new advance will give new opportunities for greed and tyranny. Every removal of distress will make more possible a smug satisfaction with material well-being. We shall always need to provoke one another to good works and to confess our sins one to another. And this involves the church. To be sure it may be objected that, on the one hand, ecclesiasticism

is more likely to produce priests than prophets, and that, on the other hand, some of our noblest prophets are outside the ministry, and even outside the church. Yet the more ethical religion becomes, the more human and less sacerdotal are its priests, and the more prophetic are its preachers. And the highest idea of the church by no means confines the task of moral stimulus to its professional leaders: "Would God all the Lord's people were prophets." Our most vital churches today are those which vibrate with human interest, where men talk and pray about the abatement of evils and the advancement of good. Men sneer at the church as a talking place. That is its high and permanent function. It is the real Parliament of Man. The church is a permanent need in human society because it is the place for talking to God and talking to men about righteousness, and faith, and love. Professor Swing once said: "We talk, and talk, and talk for a hundred years and then the thing is done." Why not do it without the talking, and do it at once? Yes, why not bring the New Jerusalem down to earth at once? Things do not come that way. A few men see the ideal afar; they tell us what they see; they chide us for our blindness; more of us begin to see and talk of the vision; at last everybody sees.

The church may change. It may have a larger ministry. It may have a different ministry. It may have new functions. But we shall need more in the future, rather than less, an institutionalizing of our faith; our faith in God and man and goodness. We shall need exercises to develop that faith, and that will require that we meet together. We shall need to talk together a great deal about duty, and about comfort, and that will require that we meet together. And that will be the church.

## THE PROBLEM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT<sup>1</sup>

PROFESSOR KEMPER FULLERTON  
Oberlin Theological Seminary, Oberlin, Ohio

One day last summer a friend and I were out for an afternoon tramp in the cañon of the South Platte. As we walked along the lower slopes of Grouse Mountain we struck an old trail. It may have been a part of the trail which the pioneers in that region once followed from Deer Creek into the Platte. Possibly it was only a long-unused wood-road. It was still easily distinguishable, however, as it wound its way through the clumps of spruce and pine. This was the interesting thing about it. No wagon could have passed that way for at least ten years, for at one point, just in the middle of the path, there was growing a young jack-pine which must have already seen a decade of vigorous life. But the feet of many men and the wheels of ancient travel had passed that way so often that the trail still retained its lines and its directions long after it had ceased to be of any service.

Tradition is an old trail. It served a useful purpose. It was once new, a path of discovery, along which only the hardy pioneer dared to beat his way. Then came the multitude of the less adventurous and appropriated the path. The trail for a time becomes a highway, the new truth a convention, easily followed and serving a useful purpose to those (and they include the most of us) who can follow only beaten paths. But one fresh morning a new explorer blazes out a more excellent way. The path from Deer Creek into the Platte must be abandoned. A new tradition must be formed.

But there are always many people who cling to the ancient modes of thought long after they have ceased to be anything but a wandering maze. Such travelers attempt to journey on the old trail in spite of the new growth in which it loses itself. The result,

<sup>1</sup> An address delivered at the opening of Oberlin Theological Seminary, September, 1911.



too often, is that they are stalled in the ancient ruts or blocked by the young trees. They never succeed in getting out of the woods or in catching a glimpse of the distant mountains where claims are to be taken up and pure gold is found.

The most of you to whom I am speaking are not engaged in professional Bible study. Your immediate interests lie in other directions. Yet the larger part of my audience, I take it, come from Christian homes. You owe most that is best in you to the Christian civilization in which you have been brought up. At the basis of that civilization lies the book which we call the Bible, and the most voluminous part of the Bible is the Old Testament. What is our present attitude toward it? Do we understand it? Is it of any value to us? Or is it, so far as we are concerned, obsolete?

If I had been addressing you thirty or forty years ago such questions would scarcely have been raised. I could have assumed that you would all be fairly well familiarized with the Old Testament through the daily reading of it at family prayers and through the many expositions of it from the pulpit. I could have assumed that you and I would have been at one in our theory of the Old Testament and in our general method of interpreting it. We should have maintained that the Old Testament, as a part of the Bible, was the Word of God in a very literal sense, and as such the only infallible rule of faith and practice. That is, we should have had a dogmatic and legalistic theory of the Old Testament. We should have regulated our faith, our morals, our views of science and of history by its inspired statements. We should have been able to tell with assurance how the earth was created in six days, how God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it, how we all came from one pair who were created in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, how Adam fell and all mankind sinned in him and fell with him in his first transgression. We should have been able to give a large number of instances where prophecies, uttered hundreds of years before, had been fulfilled to the letter in the life of Christ, and we could probably have given in substance the profound theological significance of the Brazen Serpent or the Red Cow. In other words, I could have assumed that we should

all be following the old trail which our fathers before us had followed for nearly two millenniums.

But today it is different. We are more or less acutely conscious that something is wrong. The old blazes are not leading us anywhere. The harmonies and analogies that once gave us so much satisfaction no longer do so. We are beginning to realize that we have lost our way. What is the reason for this? Is there any way out of the brush? It is my purpose to tell you, if I can, the real direction which the old path takes so that you may understand *why* you do not feel at ease in traveling it, and then to show you where the new path branches off, through what country it leads, and whither it will finally bring you.

## I

The Christian Church received the Old Testament from the Jewish synagogue. Along with the books, the church adopted the Jewish theory concerning them and the Jewish method of interpreting them. But the Jewish doctrine of Scripture and method of interpretation were not strictly homogeneous. There was a Palestinian doctrine and a Palestinian method. There was also a Hellenistic doctrine and a Hellenistic method. The latter were developed mainly by the philosophically instructed Jews of Alexandria. Of these Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, was the great representative. Though a disciple of Greek philosophy, Philo was a devoted Jew and a firm believer in the Old Testament. But he attempted to construe the Old Testament in terms of his philosophy. This was a difficult thing to do, for the Old Testament was thoroughly Semitic and thoroughly unphilosophical. But Philo managed to accomplish the seemingly impossible. He was able to do this by means of his theory of inspiration which he borrowed mainly from Plato, and his theory of interpretation which he borrowed mainly from the Stoics. According to Philo inspiration consists in the ecstasy or trance, in which the soul is absolutely passive, the humanity of the inspired one in absolute abeyance. In this passive state the soul becomes perfectly receptive to the Spirit of God, moving only as the Spirit breathes upon it, as the harp-string moves at the touch of the player. What the inspired

prophet receives at such a time is the direct word of God unqualified by any human element. The Old Testament, as the work of inspired prophets, is thus in the most literal sense God's word, that is, God's message, communicated in God's own words. The least jot or tittle is divine. This theory of the inspiration of the Old Testament attributes to it an absolute authority, the authority of God himself.

With his theory of inspiration goes Philo's method of interpretation. A surface view of the Old Testament does not suggest that it gives the very words of God. There were many things in it which Philo, as a philosopher, freely admitted were incredible or trivial, if taken literally. Therefore they were not to be taken literally. As the words of God they must have a meaning hidden beneath the surface. This meaning was to be elicited by means of the allegory. Philo did not devise the allegorical method of interpretation. It had already been employed by the Stoics in their interpretation of Homer, the Bible of the Greeks. It was the recognized method of interpreting sacred books in those days. This fact must be remembered. The method seems arbitrary to us. It did not seem arbitrary at that time. It was the necessary corollary to the accepted theory of inspiration.

Now the Christian Fathers of the first two centuries were Greek-speaking and Greek-thinking men. It was natural, therefore, that, when they took over the Jewish Scriptures, they were chiefly influenced by the theories and methods of Philo. The Old Testament, though authenticated to them by the Lord and his apostles, presented almost as much difficulty to their Christian conscience as it did to Philo's philosophically educated conscience. But by means of the accepted doctrine of inspiration and method of interpretation which Philo had already applied to the Old Testament, the Fathers contrived to make it intelligible to themselves.

But this doctrine of inspiration and method of interpretation not only enabled them to satisfy their own needs, they enabled them to meet the attacks of their opponents. Of these there were three groups. (a) There was first the Jew. The Jew asserted the binding character of the Law on the one hand and on the other hand denied that Jesus was the Messiah promised in the Old

Testament. The ceremonial law was especially difficult for the Christian conscience to understand. The Fathers, therefore, largely allegorized it. Against the Jewish denial of Jesus' messiahship the Fathers pointed to the marvelous agreement between prophecy and fulfilment. Prophecy was thus construed almost exclusively as prediction. But the extent of the agreement between prophecy and fulfilment was obtained only by means of the allegorical method of exegesis which ignored the real meaning of the prophecies and interpreted them apart from their contexts. (b) The gentile objected to the claim of Christianity to be a universal religion. It was too recent to be universal. 'If it demanded the allegiance of all men in the present and of all men in the future, what about its relation to the men of the past? A universal religion should date from the beginning of the world. The Fathers replied that it did date from the beginning of the world. The Old Testament began with the creation and the Old Testament was a Christian book. They undertook to show that it was a Christian book by the allegorical method of interpretation by which its hidden meaning, that is, its real meaning, was discovered. (c) Then there were the Gnostics and Marcion, the heretics within the church. They claimed that Christianity was the newest thing in the world instead of the oldest. It was so wonderful to them, so utterly unique, that they refused to associate it with anything in the past. In connection with their dualistic conception of the universe they drew a sharp distinction between the God of the Old Testament who created the world with all its imperfections, and the Absolute from whom the emanation proceeded which appeared in Jesus of Nazareth. These men accordingly practiced a more or less drastic criticism upon the Old Testament. As they distinguished between the God of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New, so they distinguished between the morals of the Old Testament and the morals of the New.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I have not undertaken to point out in this connection the differences between the various groups of heretics. As a matter of fact the Valentinian Gnostics were comparatively mild in their criticism of the Old Testament (Epistle to Flora). At the other extreme stands Marcion, who, strictly speaking, was not a Gnostic at all, but was a savage critic of the Jewish Scriptures.

Against these various critics of the Old Testament the proofs from prophecy and from the Christian character of the Old Testament which the Fathers had urged against the Jews and gentiles were combined and still further developed. The God of the Old Testament was the God of the New. The Messiah promised in the Old Testament was Jesus in the New. The morals of the Old Testament were essentially the morals of the New. The exegetical method by which these propositions were maintained was the allegorical method.

The result of these conflicts was that the Old Testament was retained by the Christian church as a part of its Scriptures. Its inspiration was now a fixed dogma and its authority a dogmatic authority. Most important of all, the allegorical method of interpretation, by which the Fathers had vindicated the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament, became so associated with the orthodox position that it remained associated with it down to the Reformation.<sup>3</sup> But when this theory of inspiration and this method of interpretation are examined, they are found to be wholly unsatisfactory. Philo's theory of inspiration is essentially a depersonalized theory, and therefore essentially a non-moral theory. Furthermore it is a great assumption and does not stand the test of an induction of the facts of Scripture.<sup>4</sup> As to Philo's theory of interpretation, it landed the church in a predicament from which it managed to extricate itself only by taking a step which placed it in a still worse plight. If the meaning of the Old Testament was hidden beneath the surface of its words, and the words themselves, when taken in their natural and intended sense, did not convey the real meaning, how was the reader to know whether he had ever got at the real meaning? The Gnostic

<sup>3</sup> Again I have ignored the tendencies toward a better method of interpreting the Scriptures which appeared at times in the church, largely because of the controversies with the heretics, as these did not have much influence upon subsequent developments.

<sup>4</sup> There were modifications of Philo's theory (e.g., the elimination of his idea of the ecstasy) in the church itself, called out chiefly by the opposition to the Montanistic abuses of the idea of prophecy. But as these did not have any effect upon the dogmatic view of the Old Testament they may be ignored in the present discussion.

was not averse to the allegory himself. The New Testament was inspired for the Gnostic in the same sense in which both Testaments were inspired for the orthodox believer. The New Testament, therefore, had its own hidden meanings, and the Gnostic felt quite as able to conjure out the true sense of Scripture by means of the allegory as was the orthodox student. But as between heretical allegory and orthodox allegory, who was to decide which was right? In the case of Marcion the situation was somewhat different. He rejected all allegorizing and adopted the literal sense of Scripture. Against the literal sense the allegory in itself was powerless. Tertullian, who was a shrewd lawyer, saw the difficulty. Like some others of his profession, in order to win his case against the heretics he adopted an ingenious method of avoiding the dilemma which answered for the time but which subsequently involved the church in the direst consequences. Tertullian said the only persons who can decide on the correct meaning of a passage belong to the church. The church possesses the true meaning of Scripture because it has been handed down from Christ and his apostles by an unbroken succession of bishops. Thus the allegorical method of interpretation which the Fathers borrowed from Philo finally necessitated the introduction of the authority of the church. From the time of Tertullian the authority of Scripture, though theoretically still ultimate, was more and more reduced to a subordinate position, and the church, represented by the bishops, who in turn were represented by the pope, became to all intents and purposes the ultimate authority. The process was parallel to that which is now going on in the United States. The Constitution is, theoretically, the final authority. In reality the Supreme Court which interprets the Constitution is the final authority. By judicial interpretation the Constitution and the Scripture can be relegated to a position of harmless dignity.

## II

The Reformation was a very complex movement, but one of its fundamental principles was the reassertion of the biblical form of Christianity as against the ecclesiastical form. The Reformers sought to accomplish their work by restoring the Bible to its

position of a practical final authority as well as a theoretical final authority. The laity were to depend directly upon God's word rather than upon priest or pope. But an unintelligible authority can have no practical influence. The Bible, allegorically interpreted, is unintelligible to an ordinary mind. Only ecclesiastical initiates are capable of interpreting it, as Tertullian had maintained. Accordingly Luther soon saw that a new principle of interpretation must be enunciated if the authority of Scripture were to be reasserted with any practical effect. The Holy Ghost must speak a "heavenly-clear" language. Thus Luther was driven to proclaim what may be called the great Reformation principle of exegesis, namely, that the language of the Bible must be interpreted in its natural and intended sense, in other words, just like any other book. Calvin adopted the method of Luther but carried it through far more consistently.

Thus the Reformers broke with the old Philonic and patristic method of interpretation. But they were as little conscious of what were to be the consequences of their act as was Tertullian when he introduced the principle of ecclesiastical tradition in order to supplement the Philonic theory. It has already been pointed out how intimately Philo's method of interpretation was connected with his theory of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. It was inevitable that when the Philonic method of interpretation was once discarded, the Philonic theory of inspiration and authority, which the Reformers essentially retained, would sooner or later be affected.<sup>5</sup> At first the Reformers seem to have so rejoiced in the newly discovered principle of interpretation that they pursued it apparently heedless of consequences. It is astonishing to observe to what lengths Luther went in his criticism of the Old Testament as Law,<sup>6</sup> or to see how drastically Calvin modified the patristic argument from prophecy. The former adopted a thoroughly historical view of the Law which really abrogated it as a dogmatic authority. The latter abandoned

<sup>5</sup> The Reformers did not retain Philo's theory of the ecstasy. But the Bible was for them also an infallible authority. Luther's views at this point betray inconsistencies which have since worked themselves out in most interesting ways.

<sup>6</sup> Compare his work *Against the Heavenly Prophets*.

many of the most cherished specific predictions on the ground that their interpretation as direct predictions seems to twist the sense.

The post-Reformation theologians, who were logicians rather than discoverers in religion, were not slow to perceive whither things were tending. The Reformers had proclaimed the authority of Scripture against the authority of the pope. In order to give effect to that authority they had enunciated a new principle of interpretation. Their interest in this was a dogmatic interest. When, therefore, it was seen to be at work undermining the authority which it was invoked to support, a distinct reaction set in in exegesis. Under the guise of typology, which Calvin himself had made large use of, the old theory of the hidden sense of Scripture was revived in a new form.

### III

At this point a new factor enters into the development which I have been trying to sketch. The theologians had been having it their own way during all these centuries. The dogmatic interest in Scripture had been the controlling interest. The Philonic theory of Scripture was a purely dogmatic theory and so were all its variants. The Philonic method of interpretation was a dogmatic method. Even the new method of interpretation introduced by the Reformers was, as we have just seen, introduced in a dogmatic interest.

But parallel with the Reformation proper, and largely influencing it as it was influenced by it, there was another powerful current of thought. This was Humanism, the great revival of learning, the awakening of the scientific spirit. Humanism quickened the mind of Europe as the Reformation quickened its heart. Out of the intellectual movement of Humanism has emerged the modern world with its scientific interests, methods, and achievements.

One aspect, but a very important one, of the scientific spirit was the awakened historic interest. Now the material with which the historian works consists primarily of documents. If he will draw a picture of ancient life and thought, he does it on the basis of the written records of the past. The civilization which leaves



no written records is pre-historic. It was inevitable that the explorers of the past would sooner or later reach the sacred soil of Palestine. The life and thought of ancient Israel would be examined with even a keener interest and a closer scrutiny, because of the momentous issues involved, than the civilizations of Greece and Rome. But was the method of investigation which was applied to the records of every other ancient people to be departed from in the examination of the records of Israel? At this point the method of interpretation which was used by the Reformers in a dogmatic and apologetic interest was followed by the Humanists, but this time in a scientific interest.

What is the higher criticism—a term that has become most distasteful because of the supercilious assumptions which have been read into it? It is simply the consistent use of the Reformation principle of interpretation in its humanistic formulation, that is, as a scientific, and not as a dogmatic, method of interpretation. The church has been instinctively fearful of the higher criticism. Her instinct is justified so long as she retains her dogmatic conception of Scripture. The great inspiration controversies which have racked the Protestant churches, particularly in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, are due to the antagonism between the dogmatic theory of Scripture which the Fathers received from the Jews and which the Reformers retained, and the Reformation principle of interpretation in its humanistic formulation. The dogmatic theory of Scripture and the scientific method of interpreting it have always been and always will be irreconcilable. One or the other of them must yield.

We started from the church's doctrine and interpretation of the Old Testament. We became gradually involved in a discussion of the church's doctrine and interpretation of the Bible as a whole. Let us return to our immediate subject and observe how the larger problem finds its sharpest definition, its peculiar poignancy, in the case of the Old Testament.

1. The traditional theory of the Old Testament starts from the assumption that it is inspired in the most literal sense, that it is the very Word of God in the very words of God, that as such it is an errorless, absolute authority. God speaks in it and God

cannot lie. The process of reasoning is essentially deductive. From a certain theory as to what the Word of God must be we argue to the characteristics which the Old Testament as the Word of God must have. But the incompatibility between this theory and the facts is painfully obvious in the Old Testament, much more obvious than in the New Testament. The difficulties of the Old Testament lie on the surface, the difficulties of the New Testament are deeper down. The piety of the Old Testament is not so able to throw a veil around its difficulties as the piety of the New Testament is able to conceal its difficulties, since the piety of the Old Testament itself is not so intelligible to the Christian as the piety of the New. The consequence is that the allegory has been in far greater demand to make the Old Testament intelligible and to relieve its difficulties than in the case of the New Testament. When the new principle of interpretation is introduced, it accordingly reveals more quickly in the case of the Old Testament the discord between the theory of Scripture and the facts of Scripture than it does in the New Testament. Thus the abandonment of the allegorical method of interpreting the Bible is particularly disastrous to the dogmatic view of the Old Testament.

2. But if the attempt is nevertheless made to maintain the dogmatic authority of the Old Testament after the allegorical interpretation of it has been discarded, a danger to religion arises of the gravest kind. The Old Testament as a dogmatic authority is always in danger of becoming a tyrannical authority. The reason is obvious. It has never been so closely allied with Christian experience as the New Testament has been. But in proportion as religious authority is dissociated from experience, it becomes an external authority, an authority over a man instead of an authority in him. But the more absolute such an authority claims to be, the more tyrannical it becomes, if its claims are once allowed. Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, the higher the theory of the inspiration of the Old Testament is, the more damage it is likely to do from a religious point of view, provided you are deprived of the allegory by which you can interpret it in a way intelligible to your Christian experience. Witness Mormonism.

I think it will now be plain why so many people do not know

what to do with the Old Testament. If we seek to maintain the dogmatic view of the Old Testament which we have inherited from our fathers we can find no satisfaction in it, for either consciously or unconsciously we are under the influence of the scientific method of interpreting it. In order to get the old satisfaction, we should have to return to the old method of interpretation. We are too much children of our own age to do that unreservedly, so we adopt compromise measures, and indulge in harmonistic methods and exegetical sophistries which really belong to the old method and consequently leave us restless and unconvinced. Because of the difficulties in which we find ourselves involved, an increasing number of us just leave the Old Testament alone. We may not admit in theory that it has ceased to be of any authority, but our failure to make any practical use of it shows that it has ceased to be of any practical value to us. What is to be done? The old trail has run out. It is lost in the new growth. We have arrived at the parting of the ways. Will you still stick to the old trail? If you do, it is as certain as the setting of the sun that the book which you fondly hope to recover will become more and more an alien element in your lives. It will be increasingly difficult for you vitally to connect it with your own life and the life about you. That means that your theory of the Old Testament will lose all significance for you. That means that your theory concerning it is a dead theory, an intellectual carcass. Carcasses, when retained on the premises, are apt to breed disease. The really safer path, though at first sight it may seem to be more dangerous, is to accept the logical consequences of being a Protestant, honestly follow the Reformation principle of interpretation to the bitter end, and discard the dogmatic theory of the Old Testament. Goldwin Smith once said somewhere that the Old Testament is the millstone around the neck of Christianity. I do not believe it. But the dogmatic theory of the Old Testament *is* too heavy a load for Christianity to carry, and it is unwise to attempt so unnecessarily burdensome a task.

*[To be concluded in the November number.]*

## THEOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHOD

---

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
The University of Chicago

---

In previous articles, we have attempted to indicate some of the consequences of the employment of biblical criticism, so far as it affects the task of the theologian. We saw that such critical study led one away from the dogmatic interpretation of Scripture, and introduced a historical point of view which compels us to regard the utterances of the Bible in their relation to the circumstances which occasioned them. The meaning of any scriptural passage is thus discovered when we ascertain what place it had in the experience of the man who uttered it. We found that when we proceed to investigate this experience, we come upon elements of thinking and upon specific practical problems which were very real to the biblical writers, but which may be quite unfamiliar to us. Thus biblical doctrines share the limitations of the thinking of the age in which they were produced. Moreover, since no man and no people could live in isolation from contemporary world-movements, we have come to see how inevitably the problems and the conclusions of the men of the Bible were influenced by the "pagan" ideas and practices of the time. Thus we have as the outcome of biblical criticism the necessity of conceiving theology as a living and changing movement of thought, rather than as a self-identical system.

If once we face this fact, we find that it involves a radical change in the method of constructing our theology. The traditional method assumed that we should find directly in the Scriptures what we ought to believe. But if we are compelled to admit that while we believe some of the statements of the Bible, we believe others only with modifications, and because of changed conditions of thinking disbelieve still others, it is evident that we can no longer discover just what the content of our theology should be by simply reading the Bible. How, then, shall we find out what to believe? This is the question which is eventually raised by one who follows the implications of biblical criticism.

The method of constructing doctrine by asking what is taught in an authoritative book comes from ancient times, and has so firmly established itself in the minds of men as the only proper one, that a proposal to abandon this *method* is readily interpreted as an abandonment of the *doctrines* guaranteed by it. If we give up this objective test of truth, men ask, shall we not be involved in hopeless confusion as the many minds of our varied civilization give their many answers to the problems before us? Thus while the method of scientific inquiry has made its way into one after another of the realms of human thinking, its progress has been delayed in the field of theology because of this not unnatural fear lest the precious truths of our religion shall be lightly abandoned.

This fear can be removed only by such an appreciation of the positive character of scientific method, that we shall feel in the realm of theology the same confidence in its use which we feel in its application to other realms. That this sense of positive value is growing is evident if once we make clear how our feelings have really altered in certain respects. For example, it is well known that when Copernicus set forth his theory concerning the heavens, it was felt that he was undermining Scripture. But today, we are reassured because we have had ample opportunity to see that the Copernican astronomy, instead of subtracting from the glory of the universe, has made it more wonderful than ever. Few of us would feel that religion would be the gainer by going back to the theory of creation which Luther felt to be absolutely essential.

Moreover, even if we should be compelled again to face a change of astronomical theory, no matter how radical, it would not be likely to cause any serious disturbance of our faith. We should instinctively feel in the realm of astronomy that if a new theory came to commend itself to scientific men generally, the world would be the richer rather than the poorer for the change. A new theory has no chance to gain universal approval unless it is actually a better means of bringing us into an understanding of reality than is the older theory. We feel, for example, that the purity of science is far better guaranteed by leaving open the opportunity for as frequent changes as may be necessary in order to maintain a truthful attitude toward the subject of our investigation. We should not

want a teacher of biology to swear unchanging allegiance to this or that particular content of doctrine. We should want him to be perfectly free to recognize any new data which might appear and to introduce into his theories such changes as were needed to bring doctrine into line with all the data accessible. We should not want our family physician to pledge himself irrevocably to any particular theory of disease or to the use of any specific remedy. We should rather want him to be so constantly watching the investigations of experts that he might at any time avail himself of any possible improvement in the understanding of the cause and the cure of disease.

Now this attitude of confidence in the use of the scientific method in these other realms has not been attained without a struggle. The physician still has to contend against various aspects of our inheritance from medicine men of the past, and against the therapeutic theories of various movements which, on the basis of a priori doctrines, discredit exact scientific methods of research. But it may be said that in this realm, as in many others, public sentiment now is increasingly in favor of an attitude of trust in scientific method. It should be repeated that *when once this type of confidence is established, there can be changes of content in theory without any shaking of the basis of confidence*. Even if we have temporarily to assume an attitude of agnosticism in consequence of exact investigation, we feel that such agnosticism is better than action on the basis of a theory which has been proved to be mistaken. So long as we possess accurate scientific method, and continue to use it patiently, we may hope that our lack of knowledge will some day pass into such an understanding of the matter that we may avail ourselves of all the resources of the universe for the realization of our highest desires.

A primary task of the theologian today is to cultivate the attainment of a spirit of trust in the adequacy of scientific method. The man who wants "assured results" of biblical criticism, in the sense that he may have furnished to him certain doctrines which may never have to be revised, is far from that attitude which is indispensable to any permanent co-operation between theology and the science of our day. Biblical criticism must insist on fidelity

to exact methods of research, so that one may never be obliged to feel that the partial knowledge which we have attained is final. It is because the present is not good enough and must be supplanted by a better future, that the biblical critic is eager not to close the record of investigations. Indeed, to promise "assured results" in this static sense would involve for the biblical critic the death of his science. There are no results so assured that they cannot conceivably be revised by more painstaking research. Even when critical study brings one to the reaffirmation of a traditional theological doctrine, the significance of this conclusion is very different from that assumed by the older theology. It is never "final" in the sense that it is declared to be infallibly correct. It is always regarded as valid only so long as it shall show itself to be actually superior to any other theory which criticism may suggest as an alternative.

Now, as has been said, while men have come to live with joy and confidence on the basis of the scientific attitude in other realms, the complete attainment of this attitude has been delayed in the field of theology, because religious convictions are so essential to our peace of mind, that we cannot bring ourselves to contemplate with patience the thought that we must abandon absolute certainty and begin groping after the truth. If we can feel that we have it once for all in infallible form, we can be relieved of the perplexity and uncertainty which would otherwise be inevitable. This has been the attitude inculcated by the church. Not infrequently a theologian has no other valid argument to oppose to innovations than that if one once begins to question, there will be no ending to the questioning attitude. If all our beliefs are turned into question marks, he asks, how can we maintain courage and hope? Because of the fact that it does put question marks in the place of many a dogmatic belief, criticism is frequently called "destructive."

In deference to this natural feeling, theologians have often been inclined to mitigate the radical nature of scientific procedure by attempting to discover some fixed quantity which they might retain as the basis for faith, and thus give to the altered content of a new theology a foundation as much like the old as possible. They have tried to make distinctions between the "form" and the

"essence" of biblical teaching, and while allowing criticism to dissolve the "form," if necessary, have insisted that the "essence" is not affected by critical questioning. In this way considerable modifications may be made in doctrines, while the older form of appeal to the authority of a revelation may not be altered. But why should criticism be allowed to deal with the "form," and not also with the "essence"? Can the mind be satisfied permanently with a method which provides that conclusions concerning some aspects of biblical doctrine shall be determined by the use of critical methods, while other aspects shall rest on the basis of an inherited belief in the inviolability of doctrine from criticism? Plausible as is this attempt at discrimination, necessary as it perhaps has been in a transition stage of thinking, it involves, if persisted in, a serious danger. Shall we, then, hold certain (non-essential) opinions because they have been critically tested, while we hold other (essential) convictions on the ground that these are "revealed"? Shall our beliefs concerning the most important aspects of religious life be allowed to rest on a less thorough-going scrutiny than our opinions concerning what is of slighter importance? Is such a position really as strong as the more radical proposition to admit everything alike to the testing process of critical, scientific investigation?

A certain conscientious church member, who had watched the changes coming in the realm of theology, and had seen how the direful predictions of those who dreaded the innovations had not been fulfilled, finally expressed himself as follows: "I see that the time is at hand when we shall all believe just what we really do believe." No better formulation of the outcome of the adoption of the scientific attitude in theology could be made. To believe just what we really do believe is the goal whither we are tending. The theologies of authority dare not trust that ideal. In Catholicism, by the exercise of implicit faith, the layman is expected to assent to theological propositions which may mean nothing to him. In Protestantism, pressure is brought to bear on men so that they are apt to be more concerned to find a way in which they can without dishonesty affirm the faith of the creeds than to discover exactly what possesses convincing quality. But if a doctrine does not



actually play a positive part in shaping one's religious life, can the affirmation of it be a matter of great significance? The application of the scientific method to the study of theology would mean that the right of way would be given to those doctrines which serve to promote and to interpret religious life. The reasons for their convincing power would be made plain, and they would thus be firmly established in the affections and the thinking of men. On the other hand, if a doctrine is discovered to be actually losing its hold on men, the scientific theologian will ask why this decline of interest exists. If it is due to the fact that changing characteristics of human experience have made antiquated the presuppositions of the older faith, that fact will be clearly stated, and the doctrine be forthwith revised. If, on the other hand, scientific investigation should discover some shallowness of present-day life as the cause, that shallowness would be revealed and corrected in order that men might not sink below the level of their best possible attainments.

What is needed is the recognition of the fact that doctrines are secondary, tributary to great fundamental life interests. At best they are merely more or less successful devices for symbolizing experience. If a given statement arouse no inner apprehension of its meaning in experience, that statement is absolutely useless. Its "truth" may be logically defensible; but it has lost all connection with reality. A crude philosophy which actually serves to express and promote experience is better than a formally complete system which means nothing. The primary reality is not to be found in doctrine as such, but rather in that experience through which we gain our first-hand contact with the manifold nature of the universe in which we live. The adoption of the scientific method in the study of biblical literature reveals to us clearly this intimate connection between the convincing power of a doctrine and the life which could make use of the doctrine in order to make more real its contact with the great facts of human experience. The great prophets were not concerned to conserve a system as such. They insisted on believing what they really believed. Jesus used so little of formal theology that the system-makers have been obliged to give surprisingly little space in their expositions to the contribution which he made. Paul was ready to eliminate from his Christianity

the rite of circumcision, although it was plainly commanded in his Bible. All this was in order to make faith genuine and transforming. These great men in the Bible stand for an attitude so completely in harmony with what we today know as the scientific method, that if a theology employing this method wished to appeal to authority (an appeal which, however, would involve the actual abandonment of the method itself), it could amply justify itself by the examples of the supreme religious thinkers in biblical history. This fact alone ought to reassure us. It is *prima facie* evidence that a theology which follows the spirit of scientific honesty is not likely to become anti-biblical in its influence.<sup>1</sup>

We must, however, not blind ourselves as to what is involved in the thoroughgoing adoption of the scientific spirit in the construction of theology. Two points especially need to be noted, in which a striking difference appears between a scientific theology and a "dogmatic" theology.

1. *No doctrine can be regarded as final in content.*—Here appears the place where the older type of loyalty and the new come into sharpest conflict. It is a well-known fact that the development of a sense of historical perspective is a comparatively modern acquisition. Even today, it is hard for us to realize that men ever felt as they did on certain subjects. It seems incredible that such evidently genuine fear of witchcraft should have possessed intelligent people in Salem not so very long ago. We inevitably feel that what is superstition to us must also have appeared as superstition to men of a different age; and that what we regard as true must have seemed equally true to all ages. In the realm of religious beliefs, this natural tendency to read the past in terms of our own ideals is reinforced by the inherited theory that the content of religious belief was not evolved under the influence of changing experiences, as were other convictions, but that theological doctrines were directly revealed so that all the Christian generations had access to an infallible source of truth. Any proposal to change the content of Christian belief, therefore, has met not only with the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the remark of President King (*The Ethics of Jesus*, p. 84), "But if the man of the right life (the disciple of Jesus) is to be absolutely true to the inner vision, he needs to *see straight*; . . . that is, he must have what we moderns call the *scientific spirit*" (italics mine).

natural conservatism of the human mind, but also with the assumption that since God had revealed the content of the established theology, any different theology must be less in accord with the will of God. Thus loyalty to the truth seemed to demand loyalty to the system. It is still very generally regarded as "infidelity" if one disapproves any important elements of the traditional theology.

Now so long as the adoption of the scientific method is interpreted to mean nothing more than the right to deny certain items in the authorized system, it fails to have any moral value. Indeed, it appears like a distinct program of disloyalty. The right to deny is not in and of itself so admirable that it can claim immunity on that ground alone. But, as was remarked in the first article of the series, criticism means asking questions for the purpose of obtaining more reliable knowledge. It is the more reliable knowledge, or at least the attaining of a position and a method by which this more reliable knowledge may be obtained, which alone can justify the departure from the older theories. The revisions of traditional opinions concerning the date and authorship and meaning of some of the books of the Bible have come from a more adequate knowledge of Israelitish history. And it is in the light of this growing knowledge of that extraordinarily significant history that critical scholars refuse to declare any conclusion to be final. Every critical conclusion is open to revision. Biblical scholars take this for granted.

So, too, a better understanding of church history shows us how constantly Christian beliefs have altered. Since humanity is always experimenting, it is unconsciously adopting the scientific attitude. The experiments, it is true, are not always conducted in so exact a way and with such a careful tabulating of results that a critical method of revision is established; but none the less, a change of theory results from the actual demands of social experiment. Take, for example, the doctrine of the atonement. It has in past centuries passed through several forms, some of them seeming to us today to be grotesque, and others seeming to fail in ethical quality. But when we know accurately the age in which they held sway, we see how appropriate they were to the general frame of mind in which all problems were discussed. The feudal system, with

its conception of class distinctions, and of obligations to the "honor" of the feudal lord, gave rise to Anselm's argument. But when a democratic conception of human relations comes to prevail, a doctrine based on feudal analogies ceases to be convincing. Indeed, one of the reasons why the old theology has lost its moral power today over so many men is precisely because it is essentially aristocratic in its way of picturing relations between man and God. When our conceptions of ethical relationship are conditioned by democratic social experience, we can no longer find satisfaction in theological conceptions which appeal to "divine rights." The marked change of emphasis from the sovereignty of God to the love of God in modern religious thinking is partly due to the desire to feel that God is interested in our democratic human achievements more than insistent on his own glory.

It is thus an undeniable fact that theology changes as the experience of man changes. The adoption of the scientific method would simply mean that we recognize this fact in all its significance, and that instead of opposing changes purely because they conflict with the divine rights of the older system, we proceed to interpret and guide the social strivings which are making for a change, so that the experiment may be more fruitfully conducted. Think of the wasted strength of the well-intentioned attacks by theologians and ministers on the doctrine of evolution! It was assumed that the new conception was to be resisted just because it introduced radical changes in the content of theology. And now, in belated fashion, we are taking back the strenuous objections of our fathers, and are discovering that the doctrine is after all not so dangerous to faith as they had supposed. Indeed, in the hands of Henry Drummond, it became one of the most suggestive means of giving new vitality to some of the truths of Christianity. The adoption of the scientific attitude in theology would avoid that needless warfare between science and religious thinking which is made inevitable by the attitude of loyalty to authority. Since in God's providence the changes in theology come anyway, since all the theological opposition in the world cannot prevent Copernicus and Darwin from actually controlling the conditions of our thinking, is it not better in every way for the theologian to assume such

a trust in critical scientific investigation that he may have a positive share in making the changes instead of having to play the inglorious part of an obstructionist who eventually is compelled to yield without any credit for his reluctant change? If Christian theology had not been so hostile to the discoveries of modern science, would that science have produced a "materialism" devoid of religious significance? Should we not rather have grown gradually and naturally into a larger conception of religion which should be adequate to the larger universe in which we find ourselves? To cease to be afraid of changes in theology is demanded by the adoption of the scientific spirit. To have a large part in the formulation of meanings which emerge in the new theories of growing knowledge should be the aim of the Christian theologian. But such a contribution is possible only as the fullest and heartiest adoption of the scientific spirit shall prevail.

2. *The study of religion itself is the means by which to criticize and correct theology.*—The outcome of the scientific study of the Bible, as we have seen, has been to transfer attention from the doctrines of the Bible as such to the life which expressed itself in the doctrines. Scholars are not now so much interested in biblical "truths" as they are in the religious life which they discover through a careful study of the biblical literature. The scientific attitude in the field of systematic theology will involve a like shifting of interest. The value of a system will not be judged so much by its formal completeness as by its capacity to suggest the deeper meanings of the religious life itself.

This understanding of the nature of religion is especially necessary today, when the content of doctrines is being so rapidly altered. The situation is extremely puzzling to many men who ought to be leaders of thought. They have been taught to think of theology as a system of truth which must be maintained intact. Their loyalty to this ideal often leads to opposition to change, and may throw the leadership of the changing ideals into the hands of those who are hostile to the evangelical interests of Christianity. But an accurate understanding of religion itself would prevent this unfortunate identification of faith itself with a single formulation of faith.

In general, it may be said that the most sympathetic interpre-

tations of past phases of religious belief come from those who have learned to study religion itself, rather than doctrines isolated from the life in which alone they have any meaning. One who is thus equipped sees why certain social or political or economic conditions make inevitable the asking of certain questions, the answers to which assume great importance. When any of these conditions change, the questions which are asked also change. Now one who actually knows religion as it historically exists will see why changes in doctrine took place, and will be able to give a just interpretation of the situation.

This practice of the scientific imagination in the realm of history is coming to be very common. It is this which gives to modern books on the religion of the Bible their attractiveness and their flavor of reality. To carry over into the field of constructive theology this same method and this same attitude is indispensable, if the theologian is really to be able to tell men what they ought to believe. That momentous changes have taken place in our life in the past century is evident to all. That the changes are bringing important alterations in our religious beliefs and practices is equally evident. Insensibly men perceive that a mere repetition of the old doctrines does not reveal that vital touch with the age which is imperative. Now the only way in which to avoid serious mistakes in the adjustment of our theology is to understand the exact nature of the religious needs of today, as these are conditioned by our circumstances. It is easy enough to persist in holding to the established forms of belief, even though these have lost their power to convince. Or it is equally easy to go to the opposite extreme, and forfeit all historical religious values in an attempt to be accurately scientific in all matters save the one item of religion itself. Only the man competent to investigate the actual *religious* phenomena is in a position to do justice to the religious needs by a theology which can claim a right to the affections of men. There is grave danger here lest we may allow the diagnosis to be made by those whose interests are not primarily religious, and who shall therefore fail to discern some of the most essential elements in the problem of interpreting life.

This demand for a norm growing out of an accurate under-

standing of religion involves a significant change in the method of constructing theology. In the place of the older plan of establishing a theory of inspiration which guaranteed the truth of the biblical statements from which theology was to be derived, the scientific ideal places first a thorough study of religion itself—of the religion of the Bible, of course, but also of the religion of extra-biblical times—so as to gain a clear conception of the function of doctrine in a growing and changing religious life. With the knowledge thus gained, the theologian will survey the changes taking place in his day with the sympathy gained by expert knowledge, and will actually take the lead in suggesting improved formulae in which religious faith may find adequate expression in the light of present conditions. The norm for the construction of theology is no longer to be found in any given statement of faith, or in any isolated section of history, but rather in the immanent principles of growth and life which are to be ascertained by a knowledge of the facts of religion itself. When once this method of theologizing shall have come to prevail, we shall have a means of keeping religious experience and religious doctrine in such close interrelation that the historical changes which take place will be accompanied by an adequately developing theology. One of the chief obstacles today to the reinstatement of theology into a place of influence is the timidity of theologians about committing themselves without hesitation to the scientific attitude. Only as this shall have been accomplished will the positive value of critical biblical scholarship be so felt as to reinforce and invigorate our theology.

## A BASIS FOR RECONSTRUCTION IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

---

PROFESSOR HENRY W. WRIGHT  
Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, Ill.

---

The Christian religion faces at the present time a crisis similar to that which confronted the traditional religion of the Greeks in the age of Socrates. Its influence has been weakened and its authority destroyed by scientific criticism. By the end of the Middle Ages Christianity had been formulated in terms of a definite world-view which was then accepted as its logical presupposition and has ever since been intimately associated with it. This world-view included a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of mind. The philosophy of nature, based on the Ptolemaic astronomy, the physics of Aristotle, and the Hebrew cosmogony, was geocentric and anthropocentric; the philosophy of mind embraced a formal psychology with its doctrine of simple soul-substance and a juristic ethics with belief in retributive justice, substitutionary punishment, and imputed righteousness. This world-view has been thoroughly discredited by modern thought and, because associated with it, Christianity has been discredited too.

The attitudes taken by the different parties in the present crisis reveal other marked similarities to the situation as it was in Athens at the period referred to. We today have our sophists and skeptics who reject the authority of every religion along with all other authority, moral and social, and who would reconstitute human life upon the biological principles of natural instinct and individual interest. These modern exponents of naturalism and individualism are destined to have as little permanent influence in modern times as did the Greek sophists in antiquity; since the human will demands for its satisfaction a super-individual good.

Then we have in our own time an influential school of thinkers who, like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, seek to find in *reason* a



new basis of social and moral obligation. Only the science of the present is not limited, as Greek idealism was, to an analysis of the capacities of the human mind and a study of the conditions of social life among human beings.<sup>1</sup> Through a use of the methods of inductive and experimental research it has gained such exact knowledge of the processes of nature as to make possible in many instances their control by human agency. Now it is proposed by our current rationalism to utilize this new body of scientific truth, discovered by modern methods of investigation, in the reconstructing of human society, so controlling the forces of nature and directing the organization of society as to secure the highest human welfare.

But modern intellectualism is bound to fail just as Greek intellectualism failed; for reason cannot supply an adequate basis for the moral order. This is because reason in its accepted conclusions records and interprets those ideas which have been verified by human conduct in the past; while morality is concerned with the conduct that is yet to be, with the possibilities of achievement held forth by an unexplored and, to a large extent, unknown future. For while exact knowledge of physical processes enables us to predict with certainty their future changes, it is inconceivable that any exercise of thought or discovery of reason would enable us to predict with like certainty the behavior of living beings or the choices of free agents. Life and intelligence undergo development, and true development necessarily involves the occurrence of the novel, the unexpected, the different. The moral order is thus grounded not on intellect but on will—on will, the self-organizing, self-expanding activity which is the root and source of personality itself. Moral development requires, besides knowledge, *faith*—the willingness to venture, to surrender objects already achieved and proven satisfactory, for the sake of ends which, although more extensive and far-reaching, are as yet uncertain and untried. Such faith is requisite in each successive step of moral development—in the surrender of an assured present

<sup>1</sup> Of course Greek idealism did not altogether lack a philosophy of nature, particularly in the case of Aristotle. But its ethical and social recommendations, most fully expressed in Plato's *Republic*, were based entirely upon a study of human nature.

enjoyment in the interest of an uncertain future, in the sacrifice of an experienced individual interest for the sake of an untried social good, in the subordination of approved human welfare to a problematic cosmical purpose.

The mission of religion has been to arouse and strengthen this faith which is essential to moral development. But in order thus indirectly to uphold the moral and social order, a religion must fulfil two requirements: (1) Its beliefs must agree with the verified conclusions of reason, so far as these extend. (2) Its world-view must be such as to promise satisfaction to the demand of human volition for a completely organized and all-comprehensive life.

The Christian religion, whose essence consists in a *revelation of God as a being of infinite benevolence whose devotion to his creatures leads him continuously to strive and even to suffer for their well-being*, produced in mankind a moral faith which served as the foundation for a new moral and social order. It was inevitable that in the centuries following the essential principles of Christianity should be interpreted in terms of the philosophical conceptions then current. The result was a Christian cosmology, anthropology, and eschatology, which in the course of scientific progress were bound to become outworn, and which in fact have become so.

Now the question arises whether, if we cast aside the philosophy which has become associated through tradition with the Christian religion, we still possess in that revelation of the nature of God which is the heart and core of historic Christianity an available source of the needed moral faith. Let us consider how the Christian revelation of God, stripped of all interpretations and taken in its essential simplicity, meets the two requirements laid down above.

I. In the first place, does it agree with modern knowledge of the world and of human nature?

Modern science and philosophy receive their most adequate and characteristic expression, perhaps, in the evolutionary interpretation of the world. In this modern world-view we may distinguish three features:

1. The universe is *really progressive*. Its processes have been

means to an end and this end, the existence of a self-developing society of intelligent persons, possesses moral value. This fact that *reality develops* rules out both the materialism which seeks to include all the cosmic processes within the limits of a mechanically determined system, and the idealism which construes reality as an eternally realized purpose and thus makes all change and incompleteness merely apparent.

2. Despite the prevailing adaptation in the universe, maladjustment and consequent suffering of sentient beings are inherent in the nature of reality as a result of its incompleteness and imperfection. This aspect of reality is shown in the bitter struggle for existence waged by the lower forms of life and the incessant conflict with forces of nature which has attended human life and civilization. But through the conflict and the pain progress is secured. The struggle for existence is the cost of natural selection, and man's conflict with natural forces the price he pays for the quality of self-reliance and the ability to provide for the future.

3. Since the further progress of reality is dependent upon resident forces and these are partly or wholly self-determined, the outcome of universal evolution is still undecided. Evolution in its higher stages depends upon the efforts of living beings which must be conceived as in a degree spontaneous, and upon the actions of intelligent individuals which of course are "free." Thus an element of uncertainty is introduced into the situation, but with it goes the possibility of each living individual's making a real contribution to universal progress.

Reflection shows that the Christian revelation is not merely compatible with the evolutionary world-view but positively agrees with it in a most remarkable way on each of these three points.

1. The Christian conception of God guarantees the reality of universal progress by holding that God is actually engaged in the labor of carrying it forward. "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." The Christian view does not attribute to God a perfection or imperturbability which separates him from the sphere of change and imperfection, or reduces the whole world of time and development to unreality.

2. Christianity also admits the reality of natural evil; for according to the Christian revelation God himself suffers. But it represents the vast amount of evil actually suffered in the course of evolution as a necessary means of progress; it teaches that God's striving and suffering follow from his devotion to the purpose he has undertaken to realize in the world, and to the creatures he is aiming to perfect in the course of time.

3. According to the Christian view God has intrusted a part of his work to the free agency of man and, as man may through choice fail to do this work, God has limited himself and made the outcome of his undertaking uncertain and problematic. But through God's self-limitation comes man's opportunity; for thus only could man be given a chance to render real assistance in the work of universal progress.

II. Secondly, does that conception of God which has been described as the essential feature of the Christian religion promise to satisfy human volition in its demand for complete self-organization and an ever-expanding life? The answer is that it appears to be the only conception of God in his relation to the world that *does* make possible the complete realization of man's will under the conditions of existence, such as modern science has discovered them to be.

1. Since the divine purpose is being progressively realized in universal evolution man may reasonably expect through devotion to social and universal causes to realize, from his own individual standpoint, the universal spiritual life for which his soul yearns.

2. As the outcome of evolution has been left in part to the free agency of man and hence rendered doubtful, each human individual has the opportunity to do a work in the furtherance of universal progress which no one else can do. Every man may therefore be a fellow-worker with God in the realization of God's purpose, conscious that God needs him as well as he needs God, and knowing that if he does not do his part it must remain forever undone.

3. Since God the Supreme Reality endures suffering in the achievement of his benevolent purposes, the human individual need not fear that his own personal reality is destroyed or even

diminished by suffering or natural death undergone in the promotion of human welfare or the furtherance of universal progress. Rather is the sufferer raised to a higher plane of reality, initiated into a divine fellowship, united with God himself.<sup>2</sup>

Is not such an interpretation of fundamental Christianity suggestive of a reinterpretation of certain fundamental Christian doctrines?

1. *Providence*.—Because the divine benevolence is working in universal evolution, the human individual who devotes himself to the cause of world-betterment may hope to have provision made for him, and power given to him, by the universal spirit.

2. *Atonement*.—In the realization of any comprehensive purpose the persistence of an element of discord and opposition has its effect upon the progress of the whole, which must suffer as long as the discordant factor is allowed to remain within it. Of course, if the discordant or conflicting element is expelled or not allowed to enter, then it will itself suffer the penalty of its own recalcitrancy. Now in intrusting a part of the work of evolution to man's free agency and thus permitting rebellious and conflicting human wills to exist in his universe, God voluntarily exposed himself to the pains of defeated purpose and disappointed hopes. But God's suffering was the price he had to pay for keeping man in the universe and preserving for even a refractory human will the opportunity of changing its bent, of devoting itself to the larger super-individual ends, and thus of realizing the universal principle which is implicit within him.

3. *Sanctification*.—The persistent discharge of duty in the service of others and the world, even when accompanied by sufferings inflicted by nature or by the hands of fellow-men, is attended by increasing perfection; for only thus are the limits of a narrow individuality broken down and the human soul enabled to enter into union with the universal spirit whose nature is essentially that of self-sacrificing benevolence.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. my article on the "Christian Conception of God and the Problem of Natural Evil," in the *American Journal of Theology*, January, 1909.

# THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE

## A CONSTRUCTIVE STUDY

### IV. THE DOCTRINE AS DETERMINED BY CHRISTIAN CHARACTERISTICS

---

PROFESSOR HERBERT ALDEN YOUTZ, PH.D.

Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N.Y.

---

Certain fundamental facts touching our theme have thus far emerged from the critical study. The impossibility of resting either in some final "revealed" form of doctrine or in some strictly logical deduction, expresses the net negative result. No "authority" method and no dead-lift of thought can establish permanent confidence in humanity's great optimistic estimate of life. The Christian hope arises from within and not from without. On the positive side the doctrine is seen to grow out of some distinct type of life and experience which generates, nourishes, and guides to its noblest development this ineradicable belief in a larger life. The doctrine—its essential form and its rational validity—is conditioned by the background of life from which it springs. Its strength is relative to the strength with which we accept that type of life. The doctrine comes back to our acceptance of the supremacy of the spiritual to be measured. Spiritual life is the form of reality which sustains the belief in immortality. Jesus, the completest Exemplar of spiritual reality, is the "Author and Finisher of our faith" in a practical sense, and its rational justifier as well.

If, however, by doctrine we mean some eschatological account, some program of "last things," there is no such *Christian* doctrine. Whether these alleged Christian eschatologies are based upon Jesus' words or Paul's or upon any other apocalyptic ideal, they have no authoritative significance for the mind which is controlled by the progressive element in religious interpretation. These things inevitably reflect certain scientific and philosophic ideals belonging to their age; for the essentially *Christian* doctrine we

must examine the abiding elements common to many historic interpretations.<sup>1</sup>

The Christian doctrine of a future life for us is the inevitable implication of the spiritual ideal which Jesus exemplified. The authority and validity of the doctrine is the authority and validity of that ideal itself. Jesus' teaching on the subject was chiefly in the nature of the compelling implications of his life.<sup>2</sup> And our doctrine likewise is an implication which we trust as we trust life itself. Thus though the teachings of Jesus, like our own beliefs, come back to life for their ultimate verification and testing, he is still our guide and practical authority in this faith that lays hold of the unseen as eternal. Our mode of conceiving that authority as absolute and external has indeed received modification. The modern theologian cites Jesus as authority and trusts his spiritual message just as do the traditional theologians: only the former cites him as speaking from *within* the same round of spiritual realities as we ourselves have access to—and not from *without*. That surplusage over human experience which theorists have isolated as "divinity," and in which they locate Jesus' "authority," seems to many of us gratuitous. We may thus characterize the consciousness of Jesus and that of all spiritual personality as commensurate and harmonious, though not all lived on the same level of achievement.

The question, What is the Christian Doctrine of a Future Life? conducts us back then to the prior question, What is Christianity?<sup>3</sup> The interpretation of the belief, like the belief itself, is conditioned by the form of life out of which it rises. The constitutive elements of that complex life are the soil, climate and seed from which the

<sup>1</sup> The historic forms of the Christian faith in immortality, as well as the pre-Christian evolution, may be studied to advantage in W. A. Brown's recent hand-book, *The Christian Hope* (New York, 1912).

<sup>2</sup> Professor Scott's interpretation of Jesus seems to be built upon this view; cf. *Biblical World*, August, 1911, p. 103: "The promise of immortality which he bequeathed to men is not so much a matter of definite statement as of the larger implications of his religious teaching viewed as a whole."

<sup>3</sup> Readers in this field are familiar with the great body of literature awakened by the problem, "What is Christianity?" The difficulties involved in a concrete solution are apparent. We deal here in our discussion with certain marks of Christianity, seldom questioned.

ideal of the life everlasting springs and flourishes. What are the constitutive elements of that type of spiritual life which we differentiate as Christian? We can only essay here to characterize the cardinal points of emphasis in the Christian development of spiritual reality, and show that the implications of each and all are the driving motives of the affirmation of immortality which has always been an aspect and potent force of vital Christianity. For though we can prescribe no pattern for the Christian faith, we must always be trying to grasp its spiritual ideal in terms of its elements.

Among the characteristic ideals which have identified the spirit of the historic church with its Founder we may cite the following as dominant—pillars upon which the Christian life rests: (1) the sense of the reality of the living God as the primary fact of life; (2) the recognition of intelligence and love as in control of the world and life, conducting all in harmony with a sovereign purpose; (3) the frank enthronement of personality and its values as the supreme worth of life; (4) the recognition of righteousness as the essential bond with the divine, and the moralization of life as the path to religious reality; (5) the experience of communion with God as an inner moral achievement.

1. The Christian doctrine of a future life is first of all implicit in the primary tenet of the Christian faith—the affirmation of God as a living Reality. As an intellectual conception, this religious ideal is not indeed unique. As an absolutely regnant ideal controlling in every district of life, the consciousness of Jesus furnishes us the unique example. The sense of the divine reality has been very vivid in much religious consciousness. “God-controlled,” “God-intoxicated,” and the like are the terms in which we express this fact. Jesus’ supremacy among those who have lived controlled by this immediate awareness of God is expressed in our familiar Christian doctrine of the incarnation. “God was in Christ” expresses the catholic verdict that Jesus was controlled by this God-consciousness. To be sure, intellectual dogmas and imperfectly spiritualized religious conceptions have characterized much of the history of the church as it has followed the leadership of Jesus. Nevertheless every Christian development of power



has been characterized, however imperfectly, by the sense of the living God. This has been the very heart, the living passion of conquering Christianity. And where the vision of the divine has flamed into fulness of reality, the conviction of immortality has attained triumphant form. When the vision has waned, men have fallen back upon elaborate intellectual defenses which betray the presence of skepticism. The doctrine is a heart-value, rather than a value of the intellect; hence the failure of some scientific interpretations to grasp its force and meaning. The sense of the eternal in life outweighing and mastering the temporal concerns has been a marked characteristic of the great periods of religious history, a distinctive thing in the history of the church. And the strength of the belief in "the life everlasting" has always mounted in such periods; and the belief, in turn, has nourished and sustained the life out of which it grew.

The Christian doctrine of a future life is a form of faith which grows out of this form of consciousness in which Jesus is our supreme Exemplar—the sense of the living God in life. The affirmation of immortality is implicit in this form of faith; i.e., the unfolding of life in the forms of this faith results in the confident assurance that the spiritual realities of life are not threatened by death. God conceived as living Reality is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

2. The Christian doctrine of a future life is likewise an implication of the recognition that intelligence and love are the essential nature of God, controlling the life of the world in the interests of a sovereign purpose. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" is the Hebrew form of the conviction which Jesus "fulfilled" with a spiritual completeness which lifts it up as a "master light" of our faith. He seems to enthrone and incarnate a belief which the Hebrew partially assimilated. The amazing consistency and confidence with which Jesus made the "Father in Heaven" the center of all reality both for conduct and teaching is a unique phenomenon in religious history. His unclouded faith in the invisible Father controlling all the outworking laws and details of life, and the immediacy of this divine fact for him—these constitute a component note in the harmony of his life, and

hence a keynote for all those who "follow" him. The spiritual realities of life center for him in no abstract goodness and love but they all flow out of and conduct up to the supreme concrete fact—the living God whose nature is holiness and love. Concrete life is irradiated with God, is indeed a kingdom of God to the extent that God's purpose prevails. This spiritual grasp of the unity of the life of the world and the setting forth of that unity as the "kingdom of God" is an immediate inference or corollary of the spiritual vision of the living God. The world's life is an expression of the divine which is so real to him. The living God involves a living world for him. There is no hiatus of a natural and a supernatural with which later thinkers confuse us. But God is the great fact in the concrete life that we know. If the living God is the supreme reality, all concrete spiritual realities must crystallize into a unity expressing his immediacy and character and purpose. In other words, he views all life from the center of God's meaning and control, and he calls life thus viewed the kingdom of God. The "blessedness" to which he calls men is the simple recognition of the world as God's—all of it. It is the voluntary enthronement of righteousness and love as the law of life, the supreme principle of unity—the will of God—in the service of which all other realities must be employed. All life must be moralized from the center outward. The kingdom of God in the ultimate sense is this timeless morality-centered universe where the wills of men are in harmony with the will of God and where the human children are like the divine Father in character and service. "Life"—his great word—is life thus conditioned, seen in this majestic setting.

The ability to thus affirm the reality of God in terms of the life which environs us is again a characteristic of those who follow Jesus most closely. Not the abstract affirmation of the divine reality nor yet the theoretic confidence in a deistically governed world is characteristically Christian. But the vision of the world's life expressing God, revealing God, incarnating the divine purpose and power and goodness and love—this is the Christian view of the world. This seems to be the deepest meaning in the fulfilled "kingdom of God." The artificialities of many

theological schemes setting forth the mutual exclusiveness of the "world" and the "kingdom" has never completely obscured the vision of life and the world as God's.

Now to one who thus interprets life as alive with God, the implication of immortality lies at hand. God's purpose binding the whole together is a pledge that the values which the world serves are as eternal as God himself. To one whose life is united with this spiritual goal of endeavor the kingdom of God is an earnest that no form of death can defeat the outworking purposes of love. Christian activity has a permanent meaning and a permanent worth. Temporal defeat and failures must have a triumphant outcome somewhere in the universe of God's love and wisdom. The kingdom of God is timeless—a kingdom of imperishable values: it is not conceivable that one of God's little ones should perish in a world which exists to sustain this very value.

3. The Christian belief in a future life arises out of the exaltation of the higher personal values which is characteristic of the Christian religion. The individual in social relations is the spiritual ideal that dominates all normal developments of Christianity. The "soul" and "service" are the focal points of Jesus' teaching. The individual and society are the reciprocal aspects of the Christian gospel that has uplifted humanity.

The passion to serve and save men which has been a consistent aspect of Christian history finds its complete incarnation in Jesus who came to seek and to save the "lost." The yearning, longing note is always an aspect of the spirit of Christianity. Waste of personal values is the great sin. The defeat of moral growth is the ominous world-problem. The development and self-achievement and conservation of the highest personal values—this is the emphasis, explicit or implicit, in all that is distinctively Christian. Character and service are the ultimates of spiritual life. And these things are not to be regarded as intellectual abstractions, but as expressions of living, acting personality. The individual person is the great value in the human universe: but the individual we know only in social relations with other individuals. The conservation—salvation—of this value is the end of Christian effort, and all other forms of existence serve this end.

Now an inescapable implication of such a scheme of values is the abiding nature of the end we seek. Spiritual realities are permanent; they do not pass away with the forms of life which serve their achievement. The strength of the conviction is not in a syllogistic formulation, but rather in the instinctive trust in the highest ends we seek, and the perceived folly of allowing that spiritual values can "pass away." It sheds no light upon the mystery of death, but it enthrones a mood which absolutely trusts life and its laws. And life means mind and moral consciousness in the unpicturable relations which experience presents. The individual and society are moral ultimates in terms of which the future must be prefigured.

4. The Christian doctrine of a future life is an implication of the ethical quality of all true religion. The recognition of righteousness as the essential bond with the divine, and the moralization of life as the path to religious reality is an essential Christian emphasis. Christianity developed from a race which enthroned the moral ideal with singular fidelity. The Hebrew race was not more marked in its monotheistic world-view than in the moral vision in which it saw the one God. "Thy throne O Lord is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom." Jesus "fulfilled" this lofty vision of God who is known in righteousness. The essential quality of the religion that follows Jesus is ethical. The vision of God, the power of God, all of the higher spiritual aspects of life that bind men to men and men to God move in ethical terms. Spiritual knowledge is ethically achieved; spiritual power is ethically conditioned. This inner response of the soul which is the mark of the moral quality is likewise the mark of the Christian religion.

The recognition of morality as the essential quality of religion comes as a sort of original discovery for successive ages; but only as religion has proceeded from the moral passion has it been a virile, living thing. Our own age is stirring with a sense of the need of hitching the potencies of religion to moral problems; and discovering at the same time in moral effort the path to the eternal. The act in which a soul faces moral issues and in which it faces God is one act.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Luke 10:27, 28.

Now the essential divinity of the life that experiences and exemplifies moral reality is a form of self-realization that conducts to the consciousness of immortality. The Christian doctrine of a future life has a tap-root here. The ethical life of the race is the climate in which all convincing optimism flourishes. It is the setting—background, foreground, and sky—in which the God-inspired life pictures all the unfolding realities of life. And when the moral consciousness brings the vision of the timeless as the essence of the divine, we have a form of belief not amenable to logic. It is the Christian form of recognition that we share in the divine and hence are deathless. But the Christian doctrine of the divinity of human life has a wholly moral root and not a magic nor miraculous root as in pagan doctrines.

5. It is not so much a new step in the analysis, but rather a gathering-up of the points already summarized when we add that in the consciousness of sonship to God, which is the best form of Christian experience, we find the moral and vital certainty concerning the future. We are lifted out of the realm of inference into that of present realization. The *experience* of immortality transcends every other aspect of the problem for the one who is conscious of childhood to God, and who lives in terms of realities for which physical death has no terrors. This seems to have been the form of Jesus' fellowship with the Father, and disciples innumerable have followed Him into this experience of spiritual relations where fulness of life and trust have precluded all skepticism. This completeness of present peace in believing is immune to the unbelief suggested by physical death. Life in the full sense is the sole and complete answer to death. The affirmation of abundant, optimistic life takes the form of such an immediate sense of spiritual and eternal realities that physical death and the arguments based upon it are viewed as insignificant incidents. Jesus' characteristic emphasis was this optimistic emphasis upon "Life" as the supreme Good: and out of the same spiritual depths Christianity speaks with unfailing confidence. The deathless life of fellowship with God is thus an achievement of moral experience. Immortality is a present fact rather than a future hope. "This is life eternal that they should know thee" (Jno. 17:3). The affirmation of the true nature of immortality as spiritual union with the divine

Father of life seems to be the profound import of this passage. Spiritual experience in its highest reaches tends to verify this utterance in which we think we read the consciousness of Jesus.

The Christian doctrine of a future life then grows out of the Christian spirit and attitude toward the world as a flower grows from a seed and unfolds into a law-controlled type. "Men do not reap grapes from thorns nor figs from thistles." The spiritual universe has its laws that bind it into a consistent unity. It is not a matter of caprice or chance that the great Christian hope has attained its most beautiful and luxuriant growth in the Christian soil and atmosphere. Not superstition, but reason accounts for the strength of the confidence with which the Christian steadfastly trusts the invisible and commits himself and his best loved treasures to the unseen, well knowing that the laws of creation express a "faithful Creator." Christianity is impelled by the laws of life to affirm spiritual immortality. The Christian hope is a reasonable hope.

Thus we have sketched in outline the world-view implicit in Jesus' attitude toward life. We have tried to catch the constituent elements of his controlling ideal and spirit. For these seem to be the real determinatives of the doctrines that controlled him and that have controlled the church established in his name. A "Christian doctrine" always designates such a form of belief or such an account of truth as is produced in a spirit-filled, Christ-controlled life. That is *Christian* which is produced by the spirit of Christ. Hence we have sought to make explicit the content of that spirit, thus showing the source and hence the test-principle of Christian doctrine.

The Christian doctrine of a future life has for its core and center the affirmation of the permanence of the spiritual order and of the ultimacy of moral laws as expressing the nature of the spiritual. The spiritual universe can be trusted and all spiritual achievement is secure. In a changing world we may build upon a spiritual foundation that abideth forever. In an illusory world we may absolutely trust moral laws for they are never abrogated. The world is moral at its roots. The ethical is the true nature of things.

This is equivalent to affirming the indestructible nature of all our spiritual values and the indissoluble nature of all our ethical

ties. Goodness and love and courage and the spirit of service—we cannot believe that these can perish in a spiritual world. The forms of our social life may well be changed, developing into metamorphosed types of new beauty and efficiency. But character and love and service—these are ultimates in our spiritual world. They will survive in any spiritual world that is continuous with the life we know. And since character and love are not abstract ideals but concrete facts—expressions of personality—their continuance points to the persistence of personal identity and the indestructible nature of social relations.

The Christian doctrine of a future life—as *Christian*—cannot further trace the development of our fulfilled moral realities into the unseen, and commend its teaching for acceptance. The doctrine is Christian if it arises out of such a spirit as controlled Jesus' life. We have attended to this problem and tried to show its rationale. Of course doctrines of a future life proceeding from the common impulse will receive further determination at the hands of individual theorists, reflecting social and ethnic developments. For the spirit and ideal of Jesus as life and power, wherever it works out in the forms of the world's life, is *Christian*. But this fact does not commit us to the acceptance of any eschatological description. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." Spiritual confidence is secure, but we must trust the infinite wisdom and goodness to determine the form of the future.

To be sure, thought and imagination will make apocalyptic visions of the future, but these are no essential part of the "Christian doctrine." Eschatologies, future "states," judgments, punishments, rewards, heavens and hells—neither revelation nor speculation can justify dogmatic teaching concerning these things. They express only the forms in which we construe moral realities for the future in terms of limitations that hold us here.

The encouragement and rational justification of the optimistic faith that arises out of holy living is of greater service to life than the enforcement of a dogma from any source. The universal creed is as noble in its restraint as in its confidence—"I believe in the life everlasting." It is a belief sublime enough to lift life

to its noblest heights, to sustain it in all its crucial experiences, and to keep it triumphant in the face of death. Religious living under the guidance of the spirit of Jesus buttresses life with the conviction that spiritual reality is eternal. Historically, the hope of immortality has been a tremendous spiritual dynamic. The permanence of the things that are worth while justifies highest endeavor and achievement. But we have no apocalypse of a future to keep us idly brooding. The present mastery of life is the effectual answer to death: and Jesus Christ has incarnated that answer. He is the resurrection and the life. He died a physical death, and yet he is the living Lord of the church. "He that believeth on me shall never die." This is the moral law of Christian faith, not a pagan fiat of deification.

At the risk of appearing repetitious, we beg to guard once more against a common superficial impression, by recalling certain principles offered in an earlier discussion. For those who accept this account of our Christian belief in a future life, the popular modes of argumentation and the familiar logical "proofs" are seen in their futility. These arguments do not move in the realm of spiritual reality, and the thing "proven" seldom touches the matter of personal certainty. This confidence grows only out of life—out of what we are, out of the relationships that constitute life now. The material out of which the ultimate, invincible argument is constructed eludes the subtle generalizations of the logical reason. It grows—a confident, optimistic, irrefutable argument in the souls of men and women who enter into life bravely, purely, and earnestly, under the guidance of the spirit of Jesus Christ, in whose face we see the glory of God. It is thus, and to such lives, that Jesus Christ brings immortality to light, by making plain the implications of the highest forms of reality and truth that we know. "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." The argument is personal and persuasive, reflecting a profound experience. It is accessible to all those who, like the great apostle, enthrone the things of the spirit and "follow" Jesus until they are led into the moral realization that he is the Son of God and the Father's voice speaks through him.



## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

---

### A PROFESSIONAL READING COURSE ON THE APOSTOLIC AGE

*The investigations of recent scholarship have greatly increased the extent and richness of the contribution of the Old Testament to modern religious life; they have brought valuable contributions to our knowledge of Jesus and an understanding of his message. What have they contributed to our ability adequately to estimate the relation of the thought of leaders of the early church to modern Christianity? For several successive months PROFESSOR GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT will outline a course of reading on this topic and will discuss some of the best and most recent contributions of scholars to it. Questions for consideration should be addressed to the editors of the BIBLICAL WORLD; inquiries concerning traveling libraries containing the books of the course to the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.<sup>1</sup>*

---

#### INTRODUCTION

The importance of a careful study of the Apostolic age is at least two-fold: first, it helps us to understand Jesus, and second, it helps us to measure the historical value of our modern Christianity. It contributes to our knowledge of Jesus especially by making us acquainted with the first impression of his career and teaching on the religious and social life of Jews and gentiles. This impression has unique significance, not only because of its antiquity, but also because it was made by personal contact and not by a written word. Again, study of the Apostolic age helps to an appraisal of our own present Christianity. We should not regard the interpretation of Christ in the Apostolic age as an eternal standard. Modern investigation shows most clearly that this view would be wholly unjustifiable. But though not an infallible standard, that interpretation, by virtue of the fact that those who made it were near to the era of Jesus, not only in time, but also in their general conceptions of God and the world, has peculiar value for the student of modern Christianity and will have for future generations.

<sup>1</sup> All readers in this course are requested to see that their names are enrolled as members of the Professional Reading Guild at the office of the Institute.

There are all sorts of problems connected with the study of the Apostolic age—textual, historical, archaeological—problems that are being solved and problems that may always remain unsolved. There are problems that affect our understanding of the Apostolic age in a very direct manner, as, for example, those which are connected with the origin and character of Acts, and there are other problems that affect our understanding of that age in a manner somewhat indirect, as, for example, the relation of the Fourth Gospel to the historical facts of the life of Jesus. Some of these numerous and diverse problems we shall meet in the present course of study and we shall consider them in the light of recent investigation.

The Course will concentrate attention on the following topics:

- I. (a) The Sources of Acts  
(b) The Founding of the Church
- II. The Spread of Christianity in the Apostolic Age
- III. Christian Life in the Apostolic Age
- IV. Doctrine in the Apostolic Age.

#### BOOKS REQUIRED IN THIS COURSE

Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles*  
 Bacon, *The Founding of the Church*  
 Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity*  
 Dobschütz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church*  
 Weinel, *St. Paul: The Man and His Work*

#### BOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER READING

Ropes, *The Apostolic Age in the Light of Modern Criticism*  
 McGiffert, *The Apostolic Age*  
 Gilbert, *Christianity in the Apostolic Age*  
 Wrede, *Paul*  
 Meyer, *Jesus or Paul*  
 Weiss, *Paul and Jesus*

#### I. (a) THE SOURCES OF ACTS

In the study of Harnack's view of the sources of Acts it is to be borne in mind that he regards Luke as the author of the book. The arguments for this conclusion are set forth in his *Luke the Physician*. An integral part of the view that Luke wrote Acts is that the "we-sections" of the book are based on his own notes. But, as a companion of Paul in those periods of his missionary life which are covered by the "we-sections," Luke the author of Acts need not be supposed to have had sources for the second half of his book (16:6 onward) other than the statements of eye-

witnesses together with his own experiences. It is admitted to be possible that there are some interpolations in the second half of Acts (e.g., 16:24-34; 18:8, 9, 10, 24-28) and that an occasional passage, as 18:5-17 and 18:19-23, may be an abbreviation of some written source, but these possibilities do not affect the general conclusion.

Harnack's study of the sources of Acts is therefore essentially a study of the first half of the book. This part is however of fundamental importance in its bearing on the primitive Christian movement.

The investigation starts from the scenes and the persons around which the narrative centers. All attempts to arrive at an analysis of the sources through study of the vocabulary and style of the writing are, in Harnack's judgment, futile. The linguistic uniformity of Acts is too deep and wide to allow any safe results by this method of procedure. It is of course not denied that there are differences of style and vocabulary between the first chapters of Acts and the second part of the book, but it is held that these differences, which are never as significant as the resemblances between the same parts, may be artistic in their nature—differences which are quite explicable in the light of our knowledge of the literary ability of the author.

A cursory survey of the scenes in the first part of Acts would lead us to the conclusion that most of it rests on tradition connected with Jerusalem. This city is the chief scene of the first eight chapters, and though in later chapters the scene may be at a distance from Jerusalem the actors in some of those scenes belong in Jerusalem (e.g., 9:32-11:18) and the activity described in others emanated from the capital (e.g., 11:19-30). But closer examination shows that this view must be seriously modified. Thus the passage 13:1-14:28 and also 15:1-35, both of which begin and end in Antioch, are rather to be regarded as Antiochian tradition. Such details concerning the church in Antioch and the missionary work there as are found in 13:1 and 15:1-2, 30-35 are quite in harmony with this conclusion.

But the first of these passages points back to 12:25, for in that passage it is not said to what place Paul and Barnabas "returned," and still farther back to 11:27-30, because the prophets and teachers in Antioch are set over against those who had come down from Jerusalem (this is the significance of the clause "in the church which was *there*"). Again, the passage 11:27-30, which has to do with Christian prophets and their activity in Antioch, presupposes the section 11:19-26 in which a wave of missionary activity that was started by the persecution in Jerusalem is followed until it reaches Antioch. Special confirmation

of the view that this passage should be considered a part of the Antiochian tradition is found in the fact that the name "Christians" originated there. But 11:19 seems to be a resumption of the narrative begun in 8:1, 4. Members of the same group of people who there entered into missionary work are the subject of the narrative in 11:19-26.

When we look still farther back for material belonging to the Antiochian tradition, we are obliged to include the passage 6:1-6. A suggestive hint of the origin of this section is found in the fact that while six of the seven men mentioned in 6:5 are simply named, Nicolas is described as a *proselyte of Antioch*. Moreover the fact that Hellenists are here introduced in controversy with Hebrews is in a sense a preparation for the reference to Hellenists in 11:20. Of greater weight is the obvious logical connection between the election of the Seven and the evangelistic movement which in 11:20 reaches the city of Antioch. For through the vigorous preaching of one of the Seven the Hellenistic Jews were stirred to persecuting zeal and from that came the dispersion of many Christians from Jerusalem, one group of whom brought the gospel to Antioch.

Thus Harnack finds in chaps. 6-15 a large and homogeneous mass of material which by its constant direction toward the Syrian capital and by the close connection of the earlier parts with the later, whose source seems obvious, justifies us in regarding it as Antiochian tradition. Whether this tradition reached Luke in a written form or orally we will leave at one side for the present.

We turn to the remaining chapters of the first half of Acts (chaps. 1-5; 8:5-11:18; 12:1-24). Here we cannot reach definite results from the clew afforded by the respective scenes of the narrative. There are indeed certain statements which point to a Caesarean tradition (e.g., 8:40; 9:30), but only by an investigation of the chief personalities of these sections are we able to recognize their sources.

Peter is central in the Jerusalem traditions of 1-5, and the Jerusalem-Caesarea traditions (8:5-40; 9:29-11:18; 12:1-24) fall into two divisions, of which the larger has Peter as its center and the smaller has Philip. This second group of passages is regarded as homogeneous. The style is the same, and the parts are bound together by similar traits. But the first section (chaps. 2-5) is not homogeneous. Chap. 2 and 5:17-42 are disturbing elements.

We reach here an exceedingly important point in Harnack's analysis and must consider it somewhat fully. It is pointed out that in 3-5:16 we have a consistent and logical narrative. It begins with the first

recorded miracle of an apostle, out of which came Peter's sermon. The sermon and miracle led to the arrest and trial of the apostles. Their release and return to the brethren caused thanksgiving to God, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, a higher ethical life of the brethren, and an increased authority of the apostles, especially of Peter. This section (called A, the Jerusalem-Caesarea source) is continued in 8:5-40, 9:31-11:18, and 12:1-24. Now when we put by the side of this narrative that of chap. 2 and 5:17-42 we note a striking agreement in matter and an equally remarkable contrast in form. Thus there is here an outpouring of the Spirit, followed by a sermon of Peter. Then various consequences of the miracle and the sermon are described. The apostles are imprisoned, tried, scourged, and released. The section closes with a reference to their continued teaching.

This section is regarded as a doublet of the first, a later and much inferior recension of the same material. Its inferiority is evidenced in the fact that there is no clear motive either for the outpouring of the Spirit or for the subsequent events. In the other narrative the miraculous healing is the direct cause of all the following history.

Thus Harnack sees the actual Pentecost in the event of 4:31. The Pentecost of chap. 2 is a legendary development based on that historical fact.

The three main sources of the first half of Acts are therefore the Jerusalem-Caesarean, B (which is a recension of the first part of that), and the Jerusalem-Antiochian. Chap. 1 is relegated to a footnote. Its first part—the account of the Ascension—is regarded as belonging to the very latest tradition in Acts, and its second part—the choice of Matthias—shows no clear relationship to any other material in Acts. 9:1-28 is held to be a separate tradition, possibly based on information which Luke had from Paul himself.

As to the historical value of these various sources Harnack's judgment may be summarized in a few words. The Jerusalem-Caesarea tradition, though not unaffected by legend, is trustworthy in the main. It is plausibly conjectured that Philip or Philip and his daughters may have been the source of this tradition. The material designated as B is regarded as possessing little historical value. It is the latest and least credible part of the book. But the large Jerusalem-Antioch tradition has a high historical value. It is conjectured that it rests on material derived from Silas.

The old problem of the relation of Acts, chap. 15, to the Epistles of Paul does not lessen Harnack's estimate of the value of this section, for

he now believes that this problem can be solved in a manner which brings the Apostolic Decree into full harmony with Paul's attitude toward gentile Christians. He abandons his earlier view (1899) that the *original* recension of that decree prohibited certain foods, and holds, on the contrary, that the other recension (that of Codex D and the western Fathers), according to which the decree was a summary of Jewish ethics, was the original. He agrees with Wellhausen that the decree included only three, not four, prohibitions. The word "strangled" is regarded as a gloss. The three prohibitions concerned idolatry, murder, and fornication. These were the "necessary things" from which the gentile converts were to keep themselves. On this interpretation of the decree, it is not remarkable that the Epistle to the Galatians is silent regarding it.

Whether these three main sources of the first half of Acts were in part written or entirely oral Harnack is unable to decide. He regards it as probable that Luke in working up the Jerusalem-Caesarea tradition, especially chaps. 3, 4, and 12, depended upon a written document (Aramaic rather than Greek), and he regards it as slightly more probable, though by no means certain, that Luke received from Silas some written notes as well as much oral information as the bases of those passages which constitute the Jerusalem-Antioch tradition.

In concluding this analysis of Harnack's view of the sources of Acts, the following remarks may be made. In the first place, the results reached by him are confirmatory of the essential trustworthiness of Acts. Even the negative judgment on the historical worth of B can hardly be said to affect the fundamental content of the book. To this extent Harnack's investigation is in accord with the conclusion of some other recent scholars.

Second, the analysis of chap. 2 and 5:17-42 forces us to the conclusion that Luke, though known to have been a careful writer, was not greatly endowed with critical power, that indeed he was more deeply impressed by the effectiveness of a story than by its historical probability.

Third, the discovery of a Jerusalem-Caesarea and a Jerusalem-Antioch source in the first half of Acts gains much support from the conjecture that Philip, or Philip with his daughters, and Silas were the channels through which Luke came into possession of these traditions.

Fourth, Harnack's analysis of the sources strengthens the view that the author's aim in the book was to show how the Gospel passed over from the Jew to the gentile. It was not to give memorabilia of the apostles or a sketch of the missionary career of Paul.

## (b) THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

To the question, When was the church founded? one may reply with the counter question, What do you mean by "church"? If we mean the company of those who were attached as disciples to Jesus, who believed in him and loved him, then obviously the church was founded in the life of Jesus, as he gathered loyal followers around him. If, however, we mean the "emergence of the Christian brotherhood into a consciousness of its separate existence and mission to the world," then, according to Professor Bacon, we must find the foundation of the church in the "turning again" of Simon Peter, i.e., in his faith that Jesus was living and glorified.

"The church," says our author, "had an *unconscious* life while Jesus was with them in the flesh." He had no idea of founding what we mean by the church. This term is indeed attributed to Jesus in Matthew, but in an element of the book which is latest in origin and which has the least claim to authenticity. But Jesus founded a "brotherhood," with certain rites and observances, and it was this brotherhood which developed into the church through its loyalty to the rejected and crucified Jesus. The critical moment of this development was that when the risen Lord appeared to Cephas.

The importance of this manifestation to Peter has almost entirely disappeared from the Gospels. It is apparent in Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, and on close examination certain hints of it are found in the gospel narrative. The story was purposely overlaid with the concrete and tangible appearances of Jesus and at last was virtually lost out of the consciousness of the church. This was due in part to the greater impressiveness of an empty tomb and physical manifestations, in part also to the church's pride in its great apostles and its consequent desire to represent them as promptly and unitedly entering upon the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

The manifestation of the risen Lord to Peter is regarded, on the basis of Paul's testimony, as having been spiritual in character, a revelation of the Son *in* him. Its scene was doubtless the Lake of Galilee whither Peter and the other apostles had fled. To this locality we are turned by the story in the Appendix of the Fourth Gospel and also by Luke 5:1-11, which is regarded as based on the appearance of the risen Lord to Peter.

When we seek to come somewhat nearer to the real content of Peter's experience we are again referred to Paul's epistles. We there learn that the watchword of the common faith was the confession of Jesus as *Lord*

(e.g., Rom. 10:9; I Cor. 12:3; II Cor. 4:5-6). With this agrees the story of Luke in Acts when we look past its "idealizations" to the essential elements. In Peter's quotations from Scripture it is the Lordship of Jesus which is sought to be established. In the apostle's thought the Servant whom God had raised up unto Israel had now by the resurrection and by the phenomena of Pentecost been "made both Lord and Christ." The essential content of this faith was not a belief in the "mere revivification of an inanimate body." It was something more and different: it was the belief that he was *glorified*, that he was seated at the right hand of God, whence he should come again as the promised Christ.

And the content of this faith was the content of the gospel. "The gospel began with the resurrection." Paul and even the Galilean disciples regarded the life of Jesus as preliminary to the gospel. It was no doubt fundamental for the disciples, because the disciple *is* a disciple by virtue of an imitation of God like that of Jesus. The "complete gospel" includes that exemplification of the principle of self-denying service which we see in the life and teaching of Jesus. Still more strongly is this thought expressed when it is said that Jesus *was* the gospel, "both by revealing the truth and by conveying the life."

Intimately bound up with this view of the Lordship of Jesus is the belief that Jesus did not, even in the last weeks of his life, assume the rôle of Messiah. If he laid any claim to this title, it was only in a figurative or ethical sense. He fulfilled Israel's call to be God's "son." The title "Son of Man" is one of the "earliest embodiments of faith in the risen Jesus." That is to say, it was not chosen by Jesus as a self-designation. It is assumed that this title means the "judge and ruler of the world," and it is held that only after the resurrection was this function ascribed to Jesus.

To complete the survey of the founding of the church it is needful to consider its primitive institutions. These, according to Paul, were two—baptism and the breaking of bread. Baptism was not imposed by the authority of Christ, and therefore Matt. 28:19 and Mark 16:16 cannot be understood as words of Jesus. Yet it is thought to have been an initiatory rite from the very beginning. It was adopted as the seal of the forgiveness of sins. It was this in the ministry of John the Baptist, and therefore had the sanction of Jesus. It gained a new meaning with Pentecost. Thereafter baptism was not regarded as genuine save when it was followed by "gifts of the Spirit." This constituted the difference between the baptism of John and Christian baptism.

There is thought to be no reason why the rite of baptism may not



have been introduced at Pentecost. That day, and not the day of the resurrection, is regarded as the foundation of the observance of the "first day of the week." This observance existed long before the story of the empty tomb originated.

The rite of "breaking bread" is supposed to rest on the common meal of Jesus and his disciples in Galilee. This was perpetuated in the daily *Agapé*, which appears in the early church. But with this fraternal meal was associated a memorial act which Paul declares to have been instituted by Jesus on the night of his betrayal. This act, which in the intention of Jesus was simply a memorial, received a mystic sense from Paul, derived from his own experience. For him it was a sacrament.

With this sketch of the founding of the church the present writer confesses himself to be in large measure in hearty agreement. There are however some points at which he would ask those who are following this course on the Apostolic age to consider whether the author's view is well sustained and satisfactory.

First, are we justified in holding that Paul and even the Galilean disciples regarded the earthly life of Jesus as *preliminary* to the gospel? Is not this to give a greatly exaggerated significance to the manifestation of the risen Lord to Peter, Paul, and the others? Is it not to look at the matter from Peter's point of view rather than from that of Jesus? Is it not virtually to exalt a spiritual experience of Peter above the life and teaching of his Master? Which event was of absolutely fundamental importance, Peter's "turning again" or that personal power which Jesus had exerted upon him by word and example by virtue of which he was irresistibly led to "turn again"? When we speak of the life and teaching of Jesus as *preliminary* to the gospel, we find the essence of the gospel in Peter's or Paul's message about Jesus. Should we not rather find its essence in Jesus' revelation of the Father?

Second, does the admission that the heavenly Lordship of Jesus was the essence of primitive faith—a Lordship realized after the resurrection—require us to hold that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah, or that he did not call himself the Son of Man? Have not both these claims a large and substantial support in the gospel narrative? If the title "Son of Man" is an early "embodiment of faith in the risen Jesus," how does it happen that with the exception of a single passage in Acts it is found only in the words of Jesus? And if they who first applied this title to Jesus wished thereby to identify him with the Judge of the world, how does it happen that the significance of the term in the Gospel narrative is so indeterminate?

Third, is there any good and sufficient ground for identifying the "breaking of bread" with the *Agapé*? Does not the conjecture that Jesus founded a brotherhood "with certain rites and observances" have against it the great weight of the known method of Jesus which was thoroughly spiritual? Does not the use of the phrase "breaking bread" in Acts and I Corinthians indicate clearly that it was something unique and religious in character rather than a common meal?



## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

---

### SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS OF BIBLE CLUBS USING THE OUTLINE COURSES

*Every month from October to June there will be presented in this department of the BIBLICAL WORLD suggestions to leaders of Bible Classes, desiring to use as a basis for class work either the outline Bible-study course on "THE LIFE OF CHRIST" prepared by ERNEST D. BURTON, or that on "THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST" by WILLIAM R. HARPER. Suggestions are prepared by GEORGIA LOUISE CHAMBERLIN, Secretary of the Reading and Library Department of the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, who will be glad to consider any questions which club leaders may choose to address to the INSTITUTE.*

---

#### THE LIFE OF CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps there is no subject with which the average Christian is more familiar than the life of Christ. But this familiarity is frequently superficial. It has been gained chiefly by repeated contact with passages from the Gospels through the Sunday-school lessons or reading for devotional purposes. As a matter of fact few people possess even a reasonably *thorough* knowledge of the actual events in the life of Jesus. There are others who have gained a considerable degree of familiarity with the events of Jesus' life and of his teachings, but have no systematic view of his life as a whole, and no appreciation of the relationship of events to teachings. Still less have they the ability to estimate the point of view of the different gospels, or the necessity of an understanding of the times of Jesus. A very simple series of questions concerning matters of vital significance in the study of the life of Jesus would prove the truth of the above statement.

But more than knowledge is necessary to the Christian who holds Jesus as his example and his inspiration. Such a one must have a *sense* of Jesus, a feeling which amounts to more than knowledge, for the man

<sup>1</sup>The textbook for this course is *The Life of Christ*, by Ernest D. Burton, 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

and his principles, the views of his antagonists, and the great crises in his life as well as his manner of meeting them.

Moreover, the minister of today is dealing with groups of people who have been born into an age of questioning and inquiry. It is no longer possible to say to young people that they shall believe thus and so. They will believe, because if they are rightly directed they will see the truth and follow it for themselves, but such seeing is absolutely essential. Neither can we satisfy the present generation with the doctrine of salvation through the death of Jesus. Young people of today cry out for an inspiring life and teaching, and the example of a spirit exhibiting itself in daily service. This is an age in which leadership is demanded. If we would establish the leadership of Jesus we must teach people to know him as a hero, as a thinker, as a discoverer of new truth.

The course in connection with which suggestions to leaders will follow from month to month is a very simple one. It is based upon the arrangement of the life of Christ from the four gospels found in Stevens and Burton's *Harmony of the Gospels*. It seeks to present the life of Christ from the four gospels in chronological order, with such emphasis as shall bring to the student a true picture of Jesus, and the times in which he lived. The suggestions are prepared on the supposition that the class will meet at least twice each month. If a weekly meeting is more desirable the programs may easily be divided. Topics for reports and discussions are such as can be prepared on the basis of the biblical text itself. Many classes, however, will desire to make use of books, and from the library references given to the leader selections may be made which will be sufficiently simple for members of the class to use. It will doubtless be possible in every case to get these books put into the public library of the town. Such libraries are taking an active interest at the present time in recruiting their shelves with standard books on religious themes.

It is needless to say that in the study of the life of Jesus map work should be constantly carried on. It is a field in which the contributions of art also are many and of great value. It would be well for every club to have a special art committee which will provide pictures appropriate to each program. If the members of the class can also secure the *Harmony of the Gospels* alluded to above, the work of daily reading will be greatly simplified. A harmony may be constructed by cutting from Testaments the selections in the order in which they are given, and pasting them into blankbooks in columns, as in a regular harmony. Such a book constructed by each member of the class and illustrated with

pictures would not only interest in the making, but would result in a number of copies of an illustrated life of Jesus which might be sent to hospitals, prisons, or other places where they would be most welcome.

### *Program I*

*Leader:* (1) A brief statement concerning the sources of our information about Jesus. (2) The family life and methods and material of education among the Jewish people.

*Members of the class:* (1) A comparison of the Gospels, discussing the point at which each takes up the story of the life of Jesus. (2) The boyhood training of Jesus, and his conception of God as indicated in his intercourse with the learned men in the temple at twelve years of age. (3) The thirty years in Nazareth, based upon facts stated in the Bible, with additions supplied by a historical imagination.

*Subject for discussion.*—If we can imagine Jesus as a boy in Nazareth, shall we find him different from other children, in his method of acquiring knowledge, his enjoyment of pastimes, his performance of daily tasks, his interest in passing events? Wherein shall we look for a difference between him and other children in Nazareth?

### *Program II*

*Leader:* Political conditions in the country of Jesus, and the history and content of the messianic hope.

*Members of the class:* (1) The message of John the Baptist to his times. (2) The baptism of Jesus and his decision in the wilderness sojourn. (3) The first disciples of Jesus and the influences which drew them to him. (4) The wedding at Cana, as an illustration of Jesus in the social world of his day.

*Subject for discussion.*—Was the asceticism of John the Baptist more religious than the social attitude of Jesus?

#### REFERENCE READING

Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, pp. 111-363; Mathews, *History of New Testament Times in Palestine*, full volume; Seidel, *In the Time of Jesus*, full volume; Edersheim, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*; McCoun, *The Holy Land in Geography and History*; Holtzmann, *The Life of Jesus*, chaps. iv-vii; Sanday, *Outlines of the Life of Christ*, pp. 1-47; Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 79-135; Stalker, *Life of Christ*, chaps. i, ii, iii; Rhees, *The Life of Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 45-97; Farrar, *Life of Christ*, chaps. i-xi; Dawson, *Life of Christ*, pp. 7-56; Burton and Mathews, *Life of Christ*, pp. 9-66; Burton, *A Short Introduction to the Gospels*, full volume; Burgess, *Life of Christ*, pp. 15-79.

In the Hastings *Bible Dictionary*, four-volume edition, and in the two-volume *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, will be found articles of value on every subject touched upon in the study.

A good map for class use is edited by Professor George Adam Smith, and published by the Westminster Publishing Company.

Messrs. Underwood & Underwood of New York City have prepared a most interesting series of stereographic pictures, illustrating the land of Palestine, and the customs of its people. The following companies furnish prints of masterpieces of art, both new and old, catalogues of which can be secured without difficulty: The Perry Picture Company, Boston, Mass.; The Brown Picture Company, Malden, Mass.; The University Prints, Boston, Mass.; W. A. Wilde & Co., Chicago. The famous Tissot Pictures have been reproduced in color and may be secured from the Tissot Picture Society, 27 East 22d St., New York City.

Notable contributions to this subject from fiction are *Ben Hur*, by General Lew Wallace, and *The Story of the Other Wise Man*, by Van Dyke.

#### THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

A few years ago one of the points of attention upon which biblical scholarship centered was what is termed messianic prophecy. For centuries the conception of the prophet had been largely that of a predictor. With the application of the now prevalent historical method of study to the Old Testament, a new conception of the prophet's work appeared. Still, in many cases, predicting future events, it was seen that the basis of these predictions was most frequently the political and religious situation of the speaker's own times, and his wonderful ability to interpret the past history of his people. The prophetic gift, moreover, found its source in the prophet's new and deeper realization of the character of God. The prophets were the advocates of a theocracy. To them religion and politics were one, and we see the prophet not only concerned with religion but equally with political and social matters.

Historical study has not, however, changed the dominating nature of the personality of Jesus in relation to biblical literature. People are still asking, "Did the prophets speak of Jesus; if so, where, when, and how?" But those who have followed the work of the prophets, by the aid of modern literature concerning them, frame the question differently. They would say, "What is there in the work and teaching of the prophets which *foreshadows* the work and teaching of Jesus?" That is, was there a path along which the hope of Israel traveled, between ever-broadening

<sup>1</sup>The textbook for this course is *The Foreshadowings of the Christ*, by William Rainey Harper, 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

boundaries, toward the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and what relation has the kingdom of God in the conception of Jesus, to the old messianic kingdom, which represented the dream of the Hebrews throughout their history?

A number of years ago President William Rainey Harper prepared a course on "The Foreshadowings of the Christ," in which he carried the students through the developing phases of the messianic element in the Old Testament, showing the growth of wonderful ethical and religious conceptions, contributing to the life and literature of the Hebrew. This course was pursued by several thousand people, and since that time has been more or less freely used. Many of those who have studied the course, however, were ministers and people who had already considerable knowledge of the Bible. There is, among the mass of the people, a great curiosity in regard to this question of prediction concerning Jesus. Such curiosity is justifiable, and should be wisely met, by leading students out into the larger conception of the prophets' work, and an appreciation of the foundations which their ideals laid for Jesus' work in establishing the kingdom of God on earth.

The chief difficulty of the leader of a class in this subject will be to keep to the subject. The work of the prophets was so all-embracing that in teaching there is a constant temptation to branch out in various directions, and so to lose sight of the main issue. Since the literature on this subject is largely somewhat technical, and since the members of a class will have little familiarity with the contents of the Bible which relate to this topic, the subjects of reports and discussions at the meetings will be such as can be prepared through the study of the Bible itself from the daily readings. A single topic assigned to the leader at each meeting will help to give a background and introduction.

The study of the subject will be greatly assisted by the preparation of maps at different stages of progress. A map of the ancient world, showing the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea with the northern portion of Egypt, and the Asiatic region of the northeast, which includes Babylonia, Assyria, and the allied countries, is of first importance. The Arabian peninsula should also be included. Programs for two meetings each month are provided, the supposition being that if four meetings are desired these programs can be divided.

#### *Program I*

*Leader:* (1) The world stories of all peoples, and the ethical idealism of the prophets, represented in their treatment of the world stories of the Hebrews. (2) The life of eastern nomadic peoples.

*Members of the class:* (1) The Hebrew world-stories retold. (2) Abraham the immigrant and idealist. (3) An estimate of the life of Jacob judged by the standards of his own times. (4) The contribution of the stories of Genesis to the fundamental principles of a religious life.

*Subject for discussion.*—If the prophets retold the traditions of their people in order to convey through them religious teaching, does the value of these stories today lie in their relation to science and history, or to religious truth?

### *Program II*

*Leader:* The civilization of Egypt.

*Members of the class:* (1) Moses as a leader of his people: (a) His preparation, (b) The exodus and life with the Hebrews in the Wilderness. (2) The religious ideals of Moses as represented in the first, second, fourth, and fifth commandments. (3) The social ideals of Moses as represented in the third, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments. (4) The reading of the Song of the Exodus, chap. 15. (5) Elements in the period of Moses which entered into the messianic idea.

*Topic for discussion.*—In what respect does the tenth commandment present the highest ethical ideal of the Hebrew people up to the time of Moses?

### REFERENCE READING

Batten, *The Hebrew Prophet*, chaps. i and ii; Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, chaps. i-iv; Woods, *The Hope of Israel*, pp. 9-82; Goodspeed, *Israel's Messianic Hope*, pp. 1-46; Cornill, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 1-26; W. Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 1-46; Orelli, *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 1-134; George Adam Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, Vol. I, chap. ii; Harper, *The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament*, pp. 1-36; Chamberlin, *The Hebrew Prophets*, pp. 45-63; Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, pp. 1-74; Mitchell, *The World before Abraham*, entire volume; Lenormant, *The Beginnings of History*, entire volume; *The Biblical World*, articles by William Rainey Harper, "The Human Element in the Early Stories of Genesis," Vol. III, pp. 6 ff., 97 ff., 176 ff., 264 ff., Vol. IV, pp. 20 ff., 114 ff., 266 ff., "The Divine Element in the Early Stories of Genesis," Vol. IV, pp. 349 ff.; also Vol. VI, pp. 401 ff., article on "The Foreshadowings of the Christ," by the same author.

It is well to consult the *Hastings Bible Dictionary* as fully as possible. Specific mention of articles will not always be made, but the leader of a class will do well to look up each topic which might be explored further through this valuable dictionary.



## Current Opinion

**A World Organization of Biblical Scholars.**—The Society for Biblical Study, which was established in England in 1906, seeks to become a world-wide organization of all persons who are professionally engaged in Bible study, and of those who are private students of the Bible. This society already has associates in nearly every country, and through its monthly journal, *The Interpreter*, seeks to reach all those who are connected with it or interested in its work. A prospectus of the society may be obtained on application to the Hon. Secretary F. C. Cook, Laleham Lodge, Welwyn, Herts, England.

Archdeacon Willoughby C. Allen, of Manchester, England, recently prepared for the society an address upon "The Need of a New Catholicism in Biblical Study." This address has been published by the society, for general circulation. It appeals to all persons in all countries who are interested in the Bible to join hands in the promotion of Bible study.

The Bible was once the book of devotion; it is so still. It was once the treasure-house of material, out of which the great fabric of true theology must be constructed. It still is the test and standard of all theology. But in modern life not only the man who waits to hear the voice of God in its message, not only the framer of theological systems, but the students of comparative religions, the investigators of ancient civilizations, the researchers into the oriental languages and Hellenic dialects, all alike find ever fresh attraction in its pages. The stream of men's interests was once mainly theological and devotional; it is now also historical and archaeological, scientific and linguistic.

Three classes of persons, Dr. Allen holds, are particularly interested in the Bible: (1) The professional scholars who are engaged upon the interpretation of the Bible for religious and scientific purposes. The number of such scholars was never so large, and the scholarly interest in the Bible was never so strong as at present. (2) Ministers and other workers whose work is the instruction and training of the people. Of these, too, the number was never so large as at the present time. This group consists of persons who have received some special training in biblical study, but whose work calls for a "skilful restatement of the message of the Bible in the terms of new knowledge." (3) The multitude of private persons who find in the Bible their source of religious comfort and guidance. These persons in increasing numbers are seeking

to get a historical understanding of the Bible and greatly need the assistance of the professional interpreters of the book.

A common interest in the Bible unites these three groups and prepares the way for an effective organization of them all for the development of Bible study. The progress of religion at the present time depends largely upon the vitality and energy of Bible students to bring over into our modern thought and life the moral-religious truth which the Bible preserves to us from the ancient period.

It is increasingly becoming clear that the circumstances of modern life demand a new statement of all these and other elements in the Bible, which shall be conditioned partly by the changed conceptions of the universe given to us by the advance of science, partly by the new knowledge of the history of the growth of the biblical literature given to us by modern research and exploration; a statement, moreover, which shall be as nearly as possible in accord with every element of truth in modern knowledge. . . . The problem that lies before us is this: how to so diffuse the knowledge gained by the army of researchers that it shall penetrate and influence every department of the Christian world; how to so restate Christian belief in the terms of this knowledge that the Christian Creed shall nowhere seem to be at hopeless variance with scientific knowledge or historical fact.

The present situation calls for a new catholicism in the interest of Christianity. And this movement can best be promoted by an organization that can link together all persons, whatever the exact form of their religious belief, who are united by the common tie of devotion to the Bible and belief in its mission as a revelation of the divine. Their special interest in it may be historical, or scientific, or linguistic, or philosophic, or theological, or devotional; but all alike would desire to know all that could be known of modern exploration and research in its bearing upon the Bible. Such a society might be on one side what the Royal Society is in science, a federation of men of learning; only it should be not national but world-wide. On another side it should be of the nature of a missionary society, striving to reflect in dark corners the light of modern biblical study. On a third side it should be an information bureau to which any of its members who wished for assistance or direction in their work might turn for help.

Dr. Allen then expresses the common thought and wish of the English biblical scholars who have founded the Society for Biblical Study in inviting all persons—biblical specialists and all others interested in the Bible—to assume membership in the society, and so to advance the common cause.

## Work and Workers

### THE BARROWS LECTURESHIP

PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHMOND HENDERSON has been appointed Barrows lecturer of the University of Chicago on the Haskell Foundation for the year 1912-13, and has left America for an absence of six months in Europe and the Orient. Professor Henderson will interpret the practical, philanthropic, and humanitarian aspects of Christianity to his audiences in China, Japan, and India.

Charles Richmond Henderson was born at Covington, Ind., December 17, 1848. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 1870 and from what is now the Divinity School of the University of Chicago in 1873. After a series of remarkably successful pastorates at Terre Haute, Ind., and Detroit, Mich., Doctor Henderson became a member of the first faculty of the newly organized University of Chicago in 1892, giving instruction in the Department of Sociology, and for the first two years of the University's history serving as University Recorder. Beginning as Assistant Professor in 1892, he became Professor of Sociology in 1897, and in 1904 he became head of the newly organized department of Ecclesiastical Sociology in the Divinity School of the University. Professor Henderson is thus a member of both the Divinity and Arts faculties in the University. Since its organization twenty years ago he has exerted a unique influence over students and instructors in all departments and occupies a high position among the spiritual leaders of the institution.

Professor Henderson's sociological studies have always had a keen practical and philanthropic motive. He acted as president of the Twenty-sixth National Conference of Charities in 1898; as chairman of the Executive Committee of the United Charities of Chicago in 1909; as United States Commissioner for the International Prison Commission in 1909, and as president of that body. He has been secretary since 1907 of the Illinois Commission on Occupational Diseases. He is a member of the Société Générale des Prisons, and of the National Prison Association, of which he was president in 1902. He has been president of the Chicago Society for Social Hygiene and has recently, upon nomination of the mayor of Chicago, acted as chairman of a commission for the betterment

of the unemployed. He has recently been active on the Citizens' Committee in the fight for a pure milk supply for Chicago. Few men in America have served the great humane and philanthropic causes of the time so broadly and effectively as Doctor Henderson.

It is his chief distinction, however, that with his educational, religious, and social services he combines marked activity in productive scientific scholarship. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Leipzig in 1901, and both before and after that time has published constantly both in Germany and America. He is the author of *An Introduction to the Study of Dependent, Defective, and Delinquent Classes*, 1893, 1901; *Development of Doctrine in the Epistles*, 1894; *The Social Spirit in America*, 1896; *Social Settlements*, 1897; *Social Elements*, 1898. He has edited an Abridgment of and Introduction to the Edition of Thomas Chalmers' *The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*, 1900; and has published *Modern Methods of Charity*, 1904; *Die Arbeiter-versicherung in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord Amerika*, 1907; *Industrial Insurance in the United States*, 1907; *Social Duties from a Christian Point of View*, 1909; and *Education in Relation to Sex*, 1909.

Professor Henderson is a member of the board of editors of the *Biblical World*, the *American Journal of Theology*, and the *American Journal of Sociology*. Besides his activity in teaching and writing he is in constant demand as a preacher and speaker within and without the University, on matters of social amelioration.

## Book Review

### SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE

The title of this book,<sup>1</sup> as noted above, is *Sociological Study of the Bible*, and the first sentence of the preface describes it as an "evolutionary study of Christianity." The extent of the ground that the author attempts to cover may be seen from the headings of the main sections into which it is divided, viz.: "Preliminary View of the Bible Problem"; "Elements of the Bible Problem"; "Development of Bible Religion"; "The Spread of Bible Religion"; "The Bible and Its Religion in the Modern World." It will be seen at once that this is a comprehensive survey of a very wide field, and that the full discussion of such a series of subjects would call for a library rather than a single volume. The audience addressed is the great body of intelligent people who are interested in the interpretation of the Bible and the study of social questions. The author wishes to remedy the weakness and division that spring from the fact that "hitherto, scientific investigators of the Bible have not occupied the technical standpoint of pure sociology; nor have sociologists been familiar with the scientific approach to the Bible" (p. x). The statement will no doubt be accepted by all that the workers in the field of Old Testament criticism have, after centuries of severe toil, prepared rich material for those who are, in the largest sense, interested in the history of society and religion; and further, those men who are working at the literary and historical side of the subject need to remember that they are dealing with human life as an organic movement and not with mere isolated words or facts. One must, of course, admit that there is a place for "pure" philologists and "pure" historians, etc. I confess, however, that I cannot quite see the meaning of "pure" sociology. "Pure" mathematics I understand to be the science of space and number carried on without reference to any particular concrete problems. But "sociology" without the concrete content furnished by history, politics, economics, etc., would be an empty abstraction. In reviewing a book one does not wish to be captious or to forget the great ability and industry

<sup>1</sup> *Sociological Study of the Bible*. By Louis Wallis, formerly Instructor in Economics and Sociology in the Ohio State University. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1912. Pp. xxxv+308. \$1.50 net.

that is involved in the making of such a book as this. It would satisfy one's feelings to say "this is a book that deals with a great subject in a large way, it brings keen intelligence and wide learning to bear upon a subject that is now recognized to be of supreme importance." But perhaps some general remarks and slight criticisms may be allowed from one who is in full sympathy with the main intention of the book, the aim, that is, to quicken interest in the Bible as a great story of human life and to make the idea of "development" a living revelation and not a mere phrase. Some of us who have never lectured on "sociology" find that we have been dealing in our own way with the main ideas involved; and it is just as well to remember that the study of tribal, social, and national life is very much older than the use of this particular term (p. ix). Of course, the term could not be made prominent until the need was felt for co-ordinating the various branches of social science. The present writer in referring to a stimulating, suggestive book, *Politics and Religion in Ancient Israel*,<sup>2</sup> commended it as likely to bring home to theological students, sometimes in a startling fashion, the fact of religious development, which must be accepted intelligently by the expositor of the Old Testament; Professor Orr, in his review, met this with a "God forbid" which suggests that his idea of "progressive revelation" is a thing of abstract theology and not of real human life. (On Professor Orr's method of dealing with Old Testament subjects see pp. xvii, 12, etc.) Our author accepts the fact of a real development proved by the criticism of the documents, and he seeks to explain the action and reaction of the varied facts and forces which produced the Hebrew religion. This book takes its stand upon the broad results of Old Testament history and criticism; the author gives an outline of these for the benefit of his readers. "The scientific sociologist, approaching the Bible from the outlook of his own line of work, takes for granted the generally established results of literary and historical study of the Bible." He shows us how by a change of emphasis material belonging to one department passes over into another. "The following chapter, for instance, on the 'Making of the Old Testament' relates to a theme which would appear to fall entirely within the scope of literary introduction, but, by emphasizing that the Old Testament puts forward a series of *moral verdicts* on a social process already lying in the past we adjust the literary problem within the sociological perspective."

The author, while paying his tribute and acknowledging his debt to the great workers in the Old Testament field, such as Wellhausen,

<sup>2</sup> Rev. J. C. Todd. Macmillan, 1904.

Robertson Smith, and many others, evidently thinks that the great body of them are still too much under the influence of "metaphysics" or "theology." Speaking of certain explanations of the course of the history as due to "the genius of the great prophets" or "their peculiar experience of God," he says: "It is only with feelings of respect for the modern school, and of gratitude for its indispensable service to the course of scientific learning, that the writer ventures the opinion that this view of Israel's evolution belongs in the realm of theology and metaphysics only, and that it has no standing as a matter of science and history." It would require a careful essay to review properly this one sentence. Is this then a Comtian sociology, and does "pure" mean, not free from sectarian prejudice and traditional dogma, but free from all theological ideas? Can we confine ourselves to the mere statement that the Hebrews, like other people, believed that there were gods? And yet on p. xxxi we read that this book "views the Bible as an organic item of human life, identified in its nature and purpose with the Reality that underlies the history of the world." Does not this sound rather "metaphysical"? We do not object to it on that account, having no prejudice against "metaphysics"; but we can scarcely regard it as "pure sociology." That the author is also prepared to do justice to "the genius of the prophets" may be seen from the statement that "the imagination of Israel's prophets took fire, and blazed up in a great spiritual flame that has pierced through the ages and illuminated the history of the world." Many such noble and suggestive sayings flash out here and there in the book which show how difficult it is for any living man to keep within the limits of "pure sociology" or any other arbitrary division of knowledge and life.

In our opinion the best chapters of the book are those that deal with the author's real subject, viz.: "Kinship Institutions of Israel," "Industrial Institutions of Israel," etc. There is much here that one would like to quote in an appreciative spirit but the limits of a brief review restrain us. One would also like to discuss the author's statements concerning the "individualism" of the early prophets and his classifications of prophets into "regulars" and "insurgents." The attempt to cover the whole field of Jewish and Christian history in a series of brief statements does not seem to be satisfactory, unless these are meant to be used as the basis for lectures in which the needed amplifications and explanations can be given. For example, we have as the heading of three separate short chapters "Judaism Rejects the Social Problem," "Catholicism Rejects the Social Problem," "Protestantism

Rejects the Social Problem." Surely we must say that all these systems attacked the social problem and struggled with it. Not in the modern democratic spirit or in the range that it now lies before us could it be handled in the past. They did not solve it perfectly; it is ever in process of solution and we gladly recognize that studies of the past such as those given by our author will give practical help: but to say that the *problem* was *rejected* seems to be a peculiar use of language. The fact is that general statements do not carry us very far in dealing with one of the most complex subjects. If modern science and philosophy teach us anything, it is not to make our distinctions too sharp when we are dealing, not with separate things, but with the varied movements of life. There are many other appreciations and criticisms that we might give, showing the stimulating character of the book, but we must refrain, and conclude with the hope that it may serve the purpose that the author has in view and be the means of quickening interest in the study of the continuous life of humanity.

W. G. JORDAN

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY  
KINGSTON, ONT.







U. Bessho

T. Fujii

D. C. Greene

C. S. Davison

M. Kawazoe

C. K. Harrington

T. Matsuyama

H. J. Foss

REVISION COMMITTEE OF THE JAPANESE BIBLE

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XL

NOVEMBER, 1912

NUMBER 5

## Editorial

### THE CHURCH IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The phrase "to learn by doing" has become a commonplace in education. It is recognized that didactic instruction does not secure desirable educational results unless it is accompanied by leadership in activity. There is a possibility of grave error, however, in failing to recognize that the kind of thing we do must have a very definite relation to the kind of thing we are to learn. We do not learn A by doing B. So we do not learn religion by doing "church work." We only learn religion by engaging in religious activity, which may or may not be the same as "church work."

Religious activity perhaps takes three forms, according to the conception of religion, viz.: the ritualistic, the pietistic, the social. When religion is conceived of as a relationship between God and man, which is conditioned upon the performance of proper acts of worship on man's part, its prevailing activity is, of course, the due observance of carefully regulated ritual requirements. Here belong observance of days and hours, set forms of prayer and praise, sacramental acts, prescribed postures. When religion is thought of as an immediate relationship between God and man, Father and child, Redeemer and redeemed, its activity is likely to be that of spontaneous emotional expression. This may be ejaculatory and extempore prayer, outbursts of song, spontaneous confessions of loyalty, and testimonies of emotional experience. When religion is felt to be an essentially social matter, an attitude of a man toward his fellows, a realization of duty in human relations, the activities

of religion will be those of philanthropy, efforts for social justice, endeavors for the removal of social wrong.

Of course these conceptions of religion are not mutually exclusive. Probably the greatest religious experience would include them all. Considered, however, separately and apart (and this is quite permissible because they often exist separately in different individuals), each conception has its strength and its weakness. Ritualistic religion fosters reverence but easily degenerates into formalism. Pietistic religion produces the glowing enthusiasm that has characterized the mightiest religious movements, but there is a tendency to conventionalize the expressions of genuine experiences and to continue these after the spontaneity is gone, and for others to repeat them by sheer imitation; and this is cant. Social religion is the most vital, and by its genuine human interest brings religion into relation with the world and its needs, but no doubt there is the danger of making religion only human, and losing the sense of spiritual sustenance and power which comes from dependence on the Unseen.

Where any one of these three phases of religion exists alone its weakness is likely to be far more prominent than its strength. How many churches are going through lifeless forms of ecclesiastical observance! How many are trying to whip up an enthusiasm which has long spent its force! And even how many are busy about many things of human interest and have forgotten God! It is most significant and encouraging, however, that where these three phases of religion coexist, they tend to foster the strength of one another and to eliminate the weakness. Noble forms of religious expression carry forward a genuine religious experience between the high points of enthusiasm, and give to all social endeavors a great background of reverent recognition of God. The emotional religious life vitalizes liturgical forms, adding a genuine spontaneity, and gives an enthusiasm of faith and hope to social endeavor. And the religion of human service compels ritualism and pietism to be real by revealing inevitably the hollowness and uselessness of the unreal.

The problem of religious education in the church is the establishment of activities that shall produce this godly, enthusiastic,

humanity-serving religion. If we learn by doing we must do the things of this widely conceived religion in order to attain the religion. The members of the church must have exercise in worship, in piety, and in service. A serious question before the non-liturgical churches is the development of ritual forms of worship that shall cultivate reverence. And this is even more important for the young people than for adults. All recent studies in genetic psychology reveal the love of childhood and youth for ritual. Yet this is a subject to which the Sunday school, which is all of the church that many of the children and youth know much about, has given very little attention. The least ritualistic churches have a certain decorum about their public worship, but the Sunday school is a mass-meeting. The kindergarten and primary departments are often the best regulated in this respect. The children are learning forms and postures of prayer, the recitation in decorous fashion of great and simple classic expressions of religion, and sometimes, though unhappily not too commonly, noble hymns of praise. Whether the junior church will give us the desired development of a simple liturgical religion it is perhaps too early to say. But serious endeavors are necessary to bring up our children and youth in that right attitude expressed in the fine phrase (which of course we shall not give to them), "the fear of the Lord."

No less important is a careful study of the best opportunities of spontaneous expression of religious experience. A few years ago it seemed to be generally agreed that the most important thing that young people could do was "to take some part *other than singing*" in a religious meeting. And then it was very logically concluded that what was good at twenty years of age must be better still at fifteen and best of all at ten, so we had the most earnest efforts to secure spontaneous prayers and little speeches from children. All this was modeled on the church prayer-meeting, which in many places was already moribund. Perhaps we are in a reaction against this undue emphasis and in danger of giving up spontaneous religious expression altogether. It ought to be given up wherever it involves a self-consciousness, as is generally the case with children and with boys and girls. But young and older men and women ought to talk about religion and about its experi-

ence and its problems; and they ought to pray together and for one another. We learn by doing, and a vitality of prayer will come from the practice of prayer, and a reality of faith will come from mutual encouragement to faith. Is it not desirable so to organize our young people's meetings and church prayer-meetings that there may be opportunities but not necessities of spontaneous religious expression? We have blundered along, conventionalizing activities which were at first spontaneous and significant. We need careful study of the problem of adaptation to age, sex, religious development, of the practices of pietistic religion.

Both of the foregoing problems are easy in comparison with the third. The church is equipped to be a gymnasium of ritualistic and pietistic exercises. It may need to modernize and adapt to new conditions its methods and practices, but it has all the machinery and it may easily have the experts for the task. But to learn social service by doing is not so easy. A lesson on prayer may be followed at once by the exercise of prayer. But how shall we exercise ourselves in forgiveness, patience, justice, kindness? If religion were all to be done in church our task would be so much easier. But it is to be done in the busy world. Shall church and Sunday school merely exhort, or, to get a step farther educationally, help the people and the youth to deduce right principles of conduct, and then send them out to do the right? This does not bring the doing and learning near enough in the educational process. The doing is apart from the observation of the teacher, and cannot be controlled, criticized, rectified. The singing teacher bids us go away and practice, and then come back and sing before him for his criticism. But we never bring our moral results back for review. The church must find ways of promoting social activities under supervision. Some advanced Sunday schools are working out graded programs of social endeavor. These will show an orderly and natural advance from the simple philanthropies and kindness to animals of the young children to the wide missionary activities and community improvements of the adults. It is of the highest importance to bear in mind the distinction between the educational value of a given social activity and its immediate economic value in the advancement of some good cause. We have been so much

concerned with doing good, and especially with raising money, that we have set our attention upon these as ends to the neglect of the educational significance to the doers and donors. So far as the children and youth are concerned, at all events, we should promote no activity and solicit no money except with the main purpose of developing the social interest of the youth. We shall have to make careful study of the actual reactions of young people to these social activities. We must find out what they are learning by the doing. No doubt some of them are learning to endeavor to dodge collections or to avoid committees, a sure sign of the failure of our whole undertaking. A few churches have already employed a director of social service, whose duty is to guide the activities of the membership in human helpfulness. There are large possibilities for expert leadership in this field. Certain it is that we cannot rely upon any literary material or any exhortation to develop the passion for humanity unless with these we provide natural opportunities of social expression.

We have made great advance in the improvement of our curricula of religious education and are fairly clear regarding the course of further improvement. We are only in the beginning of a scientific study of expressional activity in religious education.

## THE JAPANESE BIBLE

PROFESSOR ERNEST W. CLEMENT

Tokyo, Japan

It is only 41 years since Rev. Jonathan Goble, of the American Baptist Free Missionary Society, put out his crude work, *The Gospel by Matthew*, the first portion of Scripture translated in Japan proper into the Japanese language.<sup>1</sup> It is only 40 years since the first Missionary Conference (in Yokohama) in 1872 appointed a Translation Committee, which began its work the following year. It is only 33 years since the first version of the Japanese New Testament was issued by Rev. Nathan Brown, D.D., of the American Baptist Missionary Union. It is only 32 years since what may be called, for convenience, the "Authorized Version" of the Japanese New Testament was published; and it is only 24 years since the "Authorized Version" of the Japanese Old Testament was published and thus made a complete Japanese Bible.

This looks as follows in tabular form:

- 1871. Goble's *Matthew*.
- 1872. Appointment of Translation Committee.
- 1873. Translation Committee began work.
- 1879. New Testament issued (Brown's).
- 1880. New Testament issued (Committee's).
- 1888. Old Testament issued (Committee's).

While, strictly speaking, we might be prevented by the limits of our subject from treating anything but the Japanese Bible, we cannot refrain from taking the liberty of writing at least a few words about the Chinese Bible and Chinese Christian literature in Japan. And, as the Chinese written language and literature formed a most important part of the learning of the Japanese educated classes, this phase is not so foreign to our topic. Before the missionaries became familiar with the Japanese language, and before they had any, or many, Christian books in Japan, they used

<sup>1</sup> Earlier translations of New Testament portions by Gutzlaff, Bettelheim, and S. Mills Williams had been made outside, and did not circulate in Japan.



extensively Chinese Christian literature. Such books as Martin's *Evidence of Christianity*, Williamson's *Origin of All Things* and *Lectures on St. Mark* were in great demand. When Wakasa no Kami learned that the book which he had picked up in Nagasaki Harbor was a Testament in Dutch (which he could not read), he sent over to China for one in Chinese (which he could read). "The faithful authors of this [Chinese Christian] literature were little aware that, while working for the salvation of China, they had been, as it were, writing with a double pointed pen and working for Japan as well. They had unwittingly been doing a work which . . . was to be twice blessed."

Later, when English was made an essential element of the curriculum of Japanese education and became the most popular and necessary occidental language in Japan, it played a similar part in the Christianization of Japan. As English literature is so thoroughly permeated with Christian ideas and ideals and biblical phraseology, it has been a very important factor in Christianizing Japanese thought, language, and literature. But we pass that by for the present.

As stated above, it was in 1888 that the complete Bible was published in Japanese, so that its present age is only 24 years, comprising 12 years each in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. And it should be borne in mind that even the New Testament in Japanese has been in circulation only 32 or 33 years, less than one-third of a century. During that brief period, its influence has been felt in many ways and phases. Of course, as the pioneer translation work was done under many difficulties, it was not entirely perfect. It was inevitable, therefore, that, with the advance made in biblical scholarship in the West, and with the tremendous development of the Japanese language, a revision should become necessary even rather early.

The first steps toward such a revision were taken at a meeting in Tokyo in 1906, of what is called "The Permanent Committee on the Translation, Revision, Publication, and Preservation of the Text of the Holy Scriptures [in Japanese]." This committee is made up of the agents of the Bible Societies (American Bible Society, British and Foreign Bible Society, and National Bible

Society of Scotland) and of one representative from each mission which co-operates; and it holds a sort of "informal copyright" of the Japanese Bible. At the meeting mentioned above, it was decided that a Revision Committee should be organized as the joint representative of the Permanent Committee and the Japanese Evangelical Alliance. But, as the latter body was soon dissolved to make way for a Federation of Churches (which has only just been organized), it became necessary for the Permanent Committee alone to organize a Revision Committee. It took its first action along this line on January 11, 1910, and, after some delays, succeeded in constituting the following committee (named in alphabetical order):

Professor U. Bessho (Methodist).  
 Rev. C. S. Davison (Methodist).  
 Rt.-Rev. H. J. Foss, D.D. (Episcopal).  
 Professor T. Fujii (Congregational).  
 Rev. D. C. Greene, D.D. (Congregational).  
 Rev. C. K. Harrington, D.D. (Baptist).  
 Rev. M. Kawazoe (Presbyterian).  
 Professor T. Matsuyama (Episcopal).

The following are the rules for the Committee:

1. The Committee shall appoint a chairman, two secretaries [one Japanese and one foreigner], and a treasurer.<sup>2</sup>
2. [The usual duties of those officers.]
3. In the revision of the current Japanese version of the Scriptures, the Committee shall be governed by the text of Dr. Nestle, as published by the British and Foreign Bible Society, it being understood, however, that in specific passages the text underlying the Revised Version of the English New Testament may be substituted, provided two-thirds of the Greek-reading members of the Committee so decide.
4. The Committee shall be further governed by the exegesis underlying the Revised Version of the English New Testament; unless by a two-thirds vote, in the light of more recent scholarship, the Committee shall adopt a different interpretation.
5. Two members of each of the divisions of the Committee, that is, two Japanese and two foreign members, shall be necessary for a quorum.
6. All decisions, excepting in the cases specified in Rules 3, 4, and 7, shall be by majority vote, it being understood that, should the Committee be

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Greene is chairman, Messrs. Bessho and Harrington are secretaries, and Mr. Davison is treasurer.

equally divided for and against a proposed change in the current Japanese version, the decision shall be in favor of that version.

7. These rules may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote, subject to the approval of the Permanent Committee, provided not less than two weeks' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to the members of this Revising Committee.

A few words about the personnel of this committee, at least about some of the members thereof, may not be without interest. Dr. Greene<sup>3</sup> and Professor Matsuyama represent the old committee, of whom only one other member (former Bishop Fyson) is surviving, but was not eligible, because he is absent from Japan. However, Bishop Foss also belongs to the ranks of the early missionaries. On the other hand, Mr. Davison, son of Rev. J. C. Davison, D.D. (one of the first Methodist Episcopal missionaries to Japan), represents the second generation and the young missionaries. Dr. Harrington is a brother of Rev. F. G. Harrington, Litt.D., who revised Dr. Nathan Brown's New Testament: they are a scholarly pair, who studied under that great biblical scholar, the late Dr. W. R. Harper, in the Baptist Theological Seminary, then at Morgan Park, Illinois, now the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. The Japanese members are also scholarly men, well fitted for their work on the committee. Concerning Professor Matsuyama's work with the old committee, Dr. Hepburn said: "Whatever virtue there is in our Japanese text is mainly, if not altogether, owing to his scholarly ability, the perfect knowledge he has of his own language, his conscientious care." Professor Bessho also has a reputation as a literary man.

Inasmuch as two members of the committee (Bishop Foss and Professor Matsuyama) reside outside of Tokyo, it is not feasible for the whole committee to meet daily. In fact, it has been deemed better to divide the committee into pairs (one Japanese and one foreigner), who work together on different portions of the New Testament. Then the entire committee meets at stated times for long sessions to consider the work of each subcommittee. It is believed that in this way more work can be accomplished in a shorter time. A tentative edition of Mark has already been

<sup>3</sup> Senior missionary of the American Board.

printed for private circulation only, with the purpose of eliciting criticism which may be helpful in the remainder of the work. It is hoped that the Revised New Testament may be published in 1914 or 1915.

The Committee in its work has the benefit, first, of the English and American Revisions and Modern Versions of the English New Testament, and the latest French and German versions; second, of several recent Chinese versions; and third, of the late Archbishop Nicolai's translation for the use of the Russo-Greek church in Japan, of the Roman Catholic version of Pere Raquet in Japan, and of Dr. Harrington's revision of Dr. Nathan Brown's work.

Though it is premature to express any opinion concerning the contemplated revision, it may be worth while to quote from the tentative edition of Mark what the Committee itself presented as certain features of the revision. The statement reads as follows:

Perhaps the chief characteristics of this new revision are:

1. The increased use of honorifics and the elimination of many pronouns. These two points belong together, for often the honorific takes the place of the pronoun in the original. In many cases, as in the Greek, the pronouns necessary in an English version are out of place in a Japanese sentence.
2. The prominence given to the historical present. This is believed to add to the vividness of the narrative while consonant with the genius of the Japanese language.

The fact that the new version will largely be used in the public service of the Church has influenced the vocabulary and the general style.

Of course, a broad and generous interpretation of our topic would entitle us to say at least a few words concerning the tracts, pamphlets, books, cards, papers, and magazines that have been rendered necessary by the publication of the Japanese Bible. At first, this Christian literature was almost entirely translations, of varying merit, by foreign missionaries. But, in the course of years, the Christian Japanese became capable, not only of making their own translations, but also of putting forth original work. Therefore, it has come to pass that the Christian world in Japan has not merely Bible Societies, but also a Japan Book and Tract Society, a Methodist Publishing House (named Kyobunkwan in Japanese), a Keiseisha, a Fukosha, a Fukuinsha, and other publishing houses, all of which find a good market for a voluminous

Christian literature. The publications demanded by the growing Sunday-school work are rapidly increasing; and the Scripture Union publications have a wide circulation. Moreover, Christian quarterlies, monthlies, weeklies, etc., are so numerous that a mere list thereof would take up a great deal of space.

In this connection, it may be well to recall to mind that in 1859 there was not a Japanese Bible, or even a portion of the Bible, publicly circulating in Japan: but the number of Bibles, portions, tracts, and books which have been circulated among the Japanese during half a century requires to represent it seven or more digits. Moreover, until not many years ago, it was very difficult to induce a non-Christian bookseller to keep the Bible on hand; for its presence in his store might prejudice him in the eyes of the public, and, besides, it was not easily salable. But such prejudice has died away, and such a demand for the Bible has sprung up as to make it a profitable article to keep in stock.

Still another outgrowth or accompaniment of the Japanese Bible, that is, Christian hymnology, demands special attention. The earliest missionaries thought and said, "The Japanese have no music in them"; but they had more faith than they had thought and began to teach hymns and organ-playing. And the general result has been that the Japanese are found capable of being "moved with concord of sweet sounds." The organ, piano, violin, etc., have come into quite general use and are even manufactured in Japan by Japanese. Individuals, quartettes, bands, and orchestras furnish music, instrumental and vocal, for private and public entertainments; and concerts in western style have become very popular. And all this is largely the result of attempts to praise God in the Japanese language.

The first attempts at hymnology were very crude and even ridiculous. Goble, who seems never to have hesitated to step in where angels fear to tread, translated "There is a land far, far away" into the colloquial with the most amusing results. There were also some rather ludicrous versions of "Jesus Loves Me," which has always been a favorite in Japan.

It is scarcely necessary to follow out in detail the evolution of Christian hymnology in Japan. It should, however, be noted that



COMMITTEE THAT PREPARED THE "UNION HYMNAL" FOR USE AMONG JAPANESE CHRISTIANS

the earliest attempts by missionaries to teach singing were through the medium of English hymns, and that it was not until 1873 or 1874 that the first Japanese hymnal was issued. For thirty years, the only hymn-books were the various denominational ones, which gradually grew larger and more numerous and better. In 1903, the first *Union Hymnal* was issued and was far and away the "best seller" of that year in all Japan. The first large edition was exhausted very soon after it was issued; and the seventh edition is now on sale. There is also a *Union Sunday-School Hymnal*, which is selling well. The hymns in the *Union Hymnal* are, with only two or three exceptions, occidental tunes;<sup>4</sup> the exceptions are harmonized Japanese tunes, like "Imayo" or "Moso." Christian hymns may be heard all over the Empire; and Christian tunes are freely used for secular music. It rather shocks the feelings of the most sensitive Christians to see and hear a grotesquely attired group of advertisers marching through the streets to the tune of "Onward, Christian Soldiers"!

The Japanese Bible has been the comfort and the consolation of many an individual. When, in the early days, some Christians, like Mr. Hara and the late Speaker Kataoka, suffered imprisonment for liberal political opinions, they found the Bible a companion of cheer and filled their minds and hearts with its encouraging exhortations. Indeed, it was the teachings of the Bible that required a new word for "individual" and also introduced into the Japanese language the English word "personal" as *perusonarū*.

The Bible has been, and is, dear to other statesmen, like Hon. Sho Nemoto, M.P., the great temperance champion, who is himself superintendent of the Bible School of a Methodist church in Tokyo. Judge Watanabe, the chief justice of the Supreme Court of Chosen (Korea), is a man who has gained the confidence of all, Japanese and Koreans, because he lives according to the precepts of the Bible.

The Japanese Holy Scriptures have been, and are, the inspiration of the life of many a Japanese business man, like the late Mr. Kobayashi, the "Lion Dentifrice" man, who exerted a strong influence for good in the mercantile world.

It is likewise the Bible which has inspired men like Ishii, of the

<sup>4</sup>The Tonic Sol-Fa System is very popular in Japan.

Okayama Orphan Asylum, Tomeoka, of the Reform School, or Home School, and others, to establish a philanthropic work, to help the poor, the blind, the neglected, the fatherless, the sick, the insane, the leper, the outcast, the Magdalene, and the worst criminal.

The influence of the Japanese Bible upon the lives of individual Japanese might be still further illustrated along other lines; but the limitations of space will not permit details. It may be summed up in the following statement, that the teachings of the Bible are molding the lives of persons on the farm, at the mechanic's bench, in the shop and manufactory, in the store, in the office, at the bar and on the bench, in the schoolroom, at the editorial desk, at the sick bed, in the hospital and asylum, in the army and the navy, in the local governments and assemblies, in the Imperial Diet, in the diplomatic service at home and abroad, in the Cabinet, and even in "Caesar's household."

Moreover, the influence of the Japanese Bible should not be measured only in relation to the nominally professing Christians, upon whose lives it has been a great power for good; it has also profoundly influenced the lives of thousands whose names are not enrolled upon the church record-books. For one reason or other (good, bad, or indifferent), they have not connected themselves with any Christian organization; but they are reading and studying the Bible and are trying to fashion their lives according to the precepts and examples of Jesus Christ. One leading Japanese pastor has estimated that there are in Japan today (probably including the nominal Christians) about one million persons who are modeling their lives according to the teachings of the Bible.

It is a matter of no small importance to trace, in outline at least, the influence of the Japanese Bible upon the Japanese language and literature. Of course, it is not to be expected that one can find in Japan the same formative influences, the making of the language, as in the cases of the English and the German Bibles. The work of Wyclif and of Luther was done at a formative period in the history of each language. But, in Japan, the Bible came at a comparatively late period in the development of the vernacular; and it came as a foreign, rather than a native, and an imported, rather than an indigenous, factor. And yet it has had an influence



by no means small, in re-forming, that is, in making over, the language of Japan. The influence of the Japanese Bible has been felt in a marked way in the vocabulary, the style, and the literature. And, in this connection, it is impossible to refrain from taking notice also of the influence of the English Bible upon the religious vocabulary.

The Bible has put new meanings into old words, like *kami* ("god"), which it has capitalized, and *ai* ("love"), which, from a



comparatively low and base meaning, it has lifted out of the mud and mire and has cleansed and purified. The Bible has compelled the coining of words to express new ideas and has thus enriched the language with new words for "individual," "sacrifice," "character," "superstition," "hymn," "eternal life," "duty," "responsibility," "liberty," "direct," "indirect," "absolute," etc. And, when it was difficult to translate a term of Scriptural phraseology or derivation, like "Christmas," "personal," "revival," "inspiration," etc., it has often been found advisable to transfer the English word

itself into the language. And often an English word like "Bible" or "blessing," may be used quite as freely as its Japanese equivalent. Moreover, allusions to scriptural incidents and quotations of phrases and even sentences from the Bible are not infrequent, even in the secular press. And biblical morality has been eloquently portrayed in such novels as *Ichijiku* ("The Fig Tree") and *Hototogisu* ("The Cuckoo"), called *Nami-Ko* in its English edition.

And the influence of the Bible is not lacking in the field of Japanese art, especially in furnishing subjects for treatment. For instance, a Christian student in the art school chose "Jesus of Gethsemane" as his subject in the graduating examination. Pictures of biblical subjects are appearing more and more in exhibitions; and, even in the rage for souvenir cards, scriptural scenes are illustrated and salable, particularly at the Christmas and Easter seasons.

Thus, the Japanese Bible, with all its resultant and correlated literature, with the aid first of the Chinese Bible and its literature and later of the English Bible and its literature, has made itself felt in Japan and among the Japanese everywhere for the past forty or fifty years. The moral and spiritual teachings of the Bible have taken deep root in Japan and are bringing forth the usual fruits of the Spirit. The Gospel, with its related civilization, has been, and is, a social, political, educational, moral, and spiritual dynamic in Japan. The life of Jesus Christ, the great biblical "hero," has been infused into the life of New Japan; and that life, with its vitalizing truths, is transforming the Japanese people.

## THE FUNCTION OF A CRITICAL THEOLOGY

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
The University of Chicago

It is evident that the considerations to which we have given our attention in the preceding articles involve certain revisions of the conception of the function of theology which has hitherto generally prevailed. Theology remains, indeed, indispensable to religion. We cannot expect our religious life to be strong and sane unless it is guided by ideas which are capable of effectively and consistently organizing the impulses and the activities of religion. It is the business of theology to supply this intellectual guidance for the religious life. That task remains as imperative for one who believes in the processes of biblical criticism as it is for one who disbelieves in critical scholarship. But the conception of the nature of this guidance is altered if one accept the legitimacy of critical principles.

In the theologies which appeared before the rise of critical scholarship, it was assumed that the theologian had merely to set forth in systematic form the authorized truths of revelation. The validity of these truths was established by showing that the doctrines under consideration were contained in Scripture. Indeed, the theologian might conceivably feel in his inmost heart a sense of revolt against some doctrine which he nevertheless felt obliged to promulgate because of its scriptural character. Have there not been instances where the merciful heart of the preacher suffered agonies because he felt that he must proclaim some stern doctrine of predestination when all the time he felt that the non-elect were not being fairly treated? The writer remembers one dramatic occasion in a classroom during his seminary course, when an instructor distinguished for his beautiful, Christlike character gave passionate utterance to something like the following: "My whole soul revolts against the doctrine, and if it were not for the fact that I feel compelled by the divine oracles to proclaim it I

should not dare to suggest what God's Word declares to be true, viz., that every babe comes into this world under condemnation because of its hopeless sinfulness!" Such was the heroism demanded by the older conception of theology.

As has been repeatedly noted in the course of the preceding discussions, critical scholarship brings to light certain facts which make imperative a revision of the conception of the Bible which underlay the older theology. We find that the utterances of the Bible were correlated to the religious life of the age in which they made their appearance, and that this historical limitation makes it impossible to regard biblical utterances as timeless and absolute truths. As a matter of fact, so far as scientific beliefs are concerned, we have largely abandoned the attempt to force our thinking into the forms of biblical thought. We cease to put into our theologies today the cosmology which dominated the thoughts of biblical men. Thus we are actually using in the construction of our beliefs in this particular realm a different test from that employed by the older theologians. And since it proves to be impossible to portion out the biblical material into water-tight compartments, we are discovering that it is necessary in the realm of specifically religious ideas to depart from the simple test of conformity which was the ruling principle of the older theology. Modern treatises on Christian doctrine are abandoning the proof-text method, and are embodying in the discussion of doctrine methods of reasoning which imply a test of truth different from the appeal to authority.

It is a well-known fact that this departure from a simple "biblical" test of doctrine is arousing serious misgivings on the part of many deeply earnest men. Accustomed, as they are, to the belief that we may rely on the truthfulness of a divine communication to men, they feel that the substitution of a different test from that of scripturalness involves a departure from the basis of divine certainty, and the entrance upon a pathway of human guesswork, the end of which no one can see. To put it sharply, the test of truth employed by the older theology was the appeal to God's will and God's revealed truth. The test employed by critical scholarship is located in human judgment, which is

admittedly fallible. A "new theology" therefore seems at first inevitably to be on a less stable basis than is the traditional theology.

It would be easy in reply to this objection to repeat the familiar criticism so often passed on the appeal to authority, showing that even when one appeals to the "Word of God," the appeal is really to what one *believes* to be the Word of God, and hence is in the last analysis just as subjective as is the appeal to what one *believes* to be true. A more important task, however, is to show just what is involved if one frankly admits the obvious psychological fact that there is no way of getting back of one's belief save by a critical examination of the validity of the belief itself; for only through this human process of critical comparison do we have any mental content of a definite sort in our consciousness. Is there any religious value in the guidance furnished by a theology which makes no pretense to infallibility, and which insists upon no essentially different test from that employed in other realms of inquiry? If so, in what does that value consist? What sort of guidance have we a right to expect from a theology based on critical scholarship?

If theology adopt the same methods and the same tests as are applied in other realms of human investigation, it is evident that the guidance supplied by theology will be analogous to the guidance which we find furnished by scholarship in these other realms. A word or two about the function of scientific formulae in non-theological fields will help to an understanding of our problem.

A scientist of international reputation has been quoted as saying that he would just as soon think of calling a chemical formula "blue" as to call it "true." This somewhat startling announcement, which seems at first like an attitude of hopeless agnosticism, is really a challenge to that realistic conception of the function of theories which underlay both the older theology and the older philosophy. The business of science used to be conceived as that of an exact portrayal of things as they are in and of themselves. Men could thus describe the findings of the scientists as "laws of nature"; and these "laws" were frequently pictured as if they had an objective power to compel facts and events. A scientist once told me with amusement of the textbook on physics which he

studied as a boy, in which he learned that gases in their expansion "obeyed" a certain law, except one refractory gas which "violated" the law. From this point of view the law is the absolute constant, and the gases are the variables. This same scientist said that today if this refractory gas were discovered not to conform to the law, the conclusion would be not that the gas was "disobedient," but that the law itself needed revision. The facts which we encounter in our experience are first; theoretical formulations are secondary. Indeed, the expression "law of nature" is being abandoned just because it suggests an objective absoluteness which the modern scientist does not intend to affirm in his doctrines. A preferable phrase is "working hypothesis." This phrase on its surface reveals the fact that a theory is always relative to the facts to be explained by it, and is to be revised whenever these same facts may be better interpreted by some new hypothesis.

Thus our ideas and our doctrines are tools which we use in our encounter with reality. In order to act consistently, in order to arrive at any goal, we are compelled to picture the successive steps which experience must take in order to arrive. We must so far as possible bring into the imagination the obstacles and difficulties to be overcome, and the resources which we may call to our aid. This complex picture of difficulties and of helpful resources is put into the form of a theory or doctrine, on the basis of which we try our experiments. In the realm of science, no one pretends that atomic or molecular theories are photographic descriptions of the ultimate constitution of matter. They are simply ways of picturing the exigencies of experimentation in relation to what we call the material world. These theories have as a matter of fact enabled experimenters to make advances in their knowledge of the ways in which physical forces may be controlled and used for the benefit of humanity. The scientist is not concerned with the problem of the metaphysical adequacy of his formulae so much as with their proved capacity to serve him in his encounters with the problems of experience.

Indeed, as we all know, when it comes to the metaphysical problem of defining the ultimate constitution of reality, philosophers have never been able to agree. Are the idealists right,

when they declare that this seemingly solid earth is actually mere immaterial activity? Or must we affirm some sort of tangible substance as our ultimate? When one observes the age-long controversies and refinements of theory on this very question of "ultimate" reality, and notices that our practical understanding, of the ways in which we may successfully cope with reality has been actually promoted by scientists with less far-reaching formulations of the problem, one discovers that so far as the guidance of life is concerned, the "working hypotheses" of scientists who put "blueness" and "truth" in the same class may be quite as valuable as are the more ambitious interpretations of metaphysicians. We have theories concerning electricity which unlock for us precious resources of power, even though no one can tell exactly what electricity *is*. We conduct transportation through the seas on the basis of theories concerning gravitation and motion, even though men may confess ignorance as to the ultimate character of gravitation, and may admit that the construction of the steamship's machinery is still in the trial-and-error stage. Efficient guidance of life is therefore not dependent on absolute metaphysical certainty in the realm of theory.

We have come to recognize this same distinction between practical efficiency and metaphysical truth in some of the religious theories contained in the Bible. For example, few scholars now feel it worth while to try to prove that the conception of the universe contained in the Bible is "true" in the absolute sense. Yet we recognize that reverence and loyalty to God were actually developed by the theology which embodied itself, for example, in the naïve conceptions of the cosmos displayed in the second chapter of Genesis. Indeed, even with our scientific sophistication, we can still find religious inspiration in the repetition of phrases, the scientific "truth" of which we should have to deny, but which nevertheless serve to arouse a sense of the reality of God. As we interpret the New Testament, we are coming to be accustomed to the presence of an eschatology which we believe to have been scientifically discredited. But we can at the same time see how admirably religious devotion was kept alive by a faith which took this eschatology literally.

The fact is, our theories in any realm are inevitably limited by our human experience, which we cannot transcend. Mr. John Burroughs in a recent article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, took up the cudgels in behalf of the intelligence of animals, which he felt had been grossly misjudged, because men have insisted on setting for animals problems which are humanly conditioned. Men endeavor to see whether the animal can develop the precise kind of intelligence which we possess. But if the tables were to be turned, we might be seriously embarrassed to meet the test which certain animals might bring to bear upon us. Suppose a hound should attempt to estimate our intelligence by discovering how accurately we could follow a trail by the sense of smell! We are absolutely unable to construct any detailed theory concerning this power of scent in dogs, because we have no experience which gives the clue to that kind of fruitful contact with reality. On the other hand, the dog is unable to use our particular kind of intelligence with any profit, because his experience is of a different kind.

Since, then, the ideas which we have and the theories which we construct are inevitably conditioned by our human experience, and since, moreover, the attempt so to construct theories that they shall embody a metaphysical transcending of our experience leads inevitably to abstractions, which may evoke high aspirations, indeed, but which are frequently not so serviceable for guidance of conduct as are less ambitious hypotheses, we are coming more and more to feel that surer guidance is to be found by critically analyzing and interpreting our experience, than by trying to transcend it. The service which ideas and theories may render is, as has been said, to picture for us the exigencies of our progress in life in so adequate a fashion that we may prepare for them, and turn them to our advantage.

Now if we sum up the total aspects of our experience, we find that we have to live in definite relationships to those aspects of our environment which are too vast and too full of mystery to have been adequately dealt with by the exact sciences. Science can conceivably explain the biological process by which a little child comes into existence; but the holy mystery of the mother's new-born love cannot be put into biological formulae. Yet it is



just as real as are the physical facts. The mother has to live in the presence of this great inner experience; and she must have words and theories in which to make definite her progress in the realm of mother-life. Art and poetry come to her rescue; religion lends its aid; and lo! we have the means of appreciating this precious experience, and of preparing men for an understanding of its significance.

Science can conceivably explain the biological processes which lead to death. But the soul of man, bereaved of precious companionship through remorseless physical force, is compelled to picture for himself the meaning of this dire event. Life, so rich and so full of significant activity, has passed into the unseen. It is just as legitimate and just as necessary to seek to formulate some theory concerning that unseen realm, as it is to speculate concerning the unseen properties of physical force. Thus arise doctrines of transmigration, of immortality, of resurrection. Every honest soul knows that the theory which he holds is conditioned by human ignorance. But although he may admit its metaphysical inadequacy, it serves to enrich his experience. Even a crude doctrine enables one actually to live in relation to this great mystery, and to draw from that relationship the enrichment of spiritual life which otherwise one would miss.

So, too, we must live in relation to that vast universal reality which includes all partial and lesser realities. It may be that the devotee of exact science will say that we have no tangible objective means of formulating any theory which will be of scientific value. But we cannot get rid of the *experience* of being set in an infinite environment, and of the joy which comes to the soul when it reaches beyond the immediate details of the world, and feels the presence of an infinite life, so real, so invigorating and so necessary to the satisfaction of our deepest aspirations. If this mystic experience is to enrich life, it, too, must receive some theoretical formulation. Thus men construct their doctrines of God, and through the guidance of these doctrines actually develop those traits of reverence, loyalty, and righteousness which are possible by living in the presence of God. Even if one's conception of God be crude, embodying impossible anthropomorphisms, even if we admit, as we admit in the case of our theories concerning life after

death, that the best thoughts we may have are scientifically inadequate, nevertheless, it is better to do the best we can than to give up the problem. The positive enrichment of life which comes from the determined attempt to picture a pathway of spiritual progress in this unseen realm is ample evidence of the importance of theorizing here as well as in the other realms of experience.

Now critical scholarship sees in the theological doctrines which have found their way into historical religion the means by which men, whose lives were conditioned by certain definite circumstances, pictured their relations to the vast unseen realm in which God is to be found. It is as true in religion as elsewhere that only those theories which actually prove themselves capable of ministering to the practical experience of men continue to live. Outgrown doctrines are, indeed, frequently retained in formal treatises and in liturgies because of ecclesiastical habits; but in order to retain a vital hold on the affections of men, a doctrine must have such a content that it can be actually used in working out the problems of religious living. We are all aware that some of the doctrines of historical orthodoxy have today a very slight hold on men, even though they still find a place in the authorized statements of theology. Those controversies which seemed so important to our forefathers, and on account of which they founded new sects and denominations, often seem to us to be matters of slight import. On the other hand, we are likely to put emphasis on some aspects of religion in which they evinced little interest.

A theology which follows the leading of the principles which have been expounded in these articles will clearly recognize this inevitable relation between human experience and efficient doctrine. It will apply in the construction of modern theology precisely the same tests as those which are used in the historical appreciation of past doctrines. If the reason for the strength of the biblical theology is to be found in the fact that it most directly and successfully symbolized in meaningful terms the fundamentals of a right relation to the unseen source of holiness and truth, the strength of any theology must depend on its regard for precisely this quality.

Now we today picture righteousness in different terms from those which characterized antiquity. Men of old believed in a

sovereign with divine rights, who should, by the exercise of his will, bring into existence the conditions which are essential to prosperity and righteousness. The free gifts of kingly favor were looked upon as the most potent sources of blessing. God, therefore, was pictured as a sovereign. The goal of his will was the "Kingdom" of God. The blessings of religion were represented as direct gifts from a personal sovereign. Justification and salvation were explained in terms of legal procedure before a kingly judge. Such a way of representing religious relationships was vital and real so long as men had a living experience of kings and potentates upon whom they were dependent for their welfare.

Today, however, we are entering in earnest into the great experiment of democracy. We have no kings to whom we can turn for special favors. Indeed, one who seeks such special favors today is liable to be accused of promoting "graft." Our highest goods cannot be given to us from a higher power. They must be worked out by us, as we intelligently co-operate with the latent resources of our environment. The best life is seen to be due to active co-operation with environing forces rather than to dependence on special favors. Consequently we are seeing a keen desire to express our relations to God in terms which seem more real and vital to us than do the symbols drawn from a monarchical régime. It is, for example, difficult today to arouse interest in that doctrine which used to be a cause of endless debate, viz., the question as to the limits of the sovereignty of God. On the other hand, the past century, which has witnessed the domestication of the conception of immanent activity expressed in democracy, has also developed a great emphasis on the conception of the immanence of God. The miracles, which in the older régime corresponded to the special acts of grace willed by a sovereign, have lost their importance as we have passed away from the older way of conceiving our relations to government, and as science has made us more and more aware of the universality of the immanent forces of the world in which we live. Theology today is inevitably reflecting this changed way of looking at moral and spiritual relationships; and theologians are making changes in emphasis and in content, in the endeavor to supply ways of picturing our relations with God which shall be more vitally effective.

A scientific theology will construct its doctrines, as has been said, by an accurate analysis of the experience of men in the present, and will seek to portray the life of righteous devotion to God in such a way as to make possible the control of all life by the realization of God. One great difficulty which confronts the revisions of theology is due to the fact that we have not yet developed adequate terms to give expression to our faith in the immanent God. The words and phrases which are used in our liturgies are taken from the days of kingly rights; and so fraught are they with religious associations, that we are rightly reluctant to give them up, even when we realize their inadequacy. It is probable that many of these terms will gradually acquire a new significance, while new terms will be discovered to supplement the inadequacy of the old. Thus we shall gradually develop a theology which shall be so real and so inspiring that men will gladly use it for the practical guidance of their spiritual life.

In emphasizing the fact of change, however, we should not forget that in the long centuries of experimentation, humanity has worked out some solutions which are of abiding value. In all realms of thought there are some theories which are so adequate that they need no serious revision. So we shall always find in the realm of doctrine certain fundamentals which are so true to universal experience that they cannot become antiquated. Thus while we recognize the differences between biblical formulations and those which seem adequate to us, it does not follow that these formulations lose all power to guide our lives. The prophets of Israel laid bare the moral aspects of religion in so truthful and searching a way, that any effective message of religious righteousness must ever find supreme inspiration in those marvelous seers of old. The Psalms represent the repeated working over of devotional literature in the actual service of worship, so that we have in them utterances which will always lift the heart to God. In the Book of Job we have an example of stubborn truthfulness which seemed like skepticism to the theological friends who sought to comfort the sufferer with "words of wind," but which will always bring a living message to turn men away from superficial formulae to a quest for the living God, even though that quest may lead

through the deep waters of doubt. In the fervent messages of the apostle Paul we feel a mysticism which lifted him above the barren wastes of the legalism in which he was educated, and which perpetually persuades men of the reality of communion with the indwelling divine Spirit. And in the words and the life of Jesus we have religious ideals put in such simple and convincing terms that we see how a life filled with the consciousness of God may be expressed in homely phrase, and in humble deed, so that the redeeming love of God may be made real.

Biblical criticism thus does not mean the retirement of the Bible as an abiding source of religious inspiration. The critical spirit really means that the same vital, experimental method of working out a living theology which characterized men of biblical times shall be allowed to operate freely today. The changes in content which are made by such a critical theology will mean the preservation of the spirit of the biblical literature. Just in so far as biblical doctrine actually serves to lead us into a deeper realization of the presence of God it will be retained. Just in so far as a modified doctrine is more efficient in promoting religious life, the modified doctrine will have the right of way. Jesus bade men judge any life or any movement by its fruits. This is the test which a critical theology welcomes. Its sole aim is to furnish to a given age the best spiritual guidance which is discoverable, whether that guidance originates in an ancient literature or in a modern experiment. But those who know best the character of the utterances of the Bible are certain that no experiments which the human race may make are likely to be of more value or of more abiding significance than are the wrestlings of those mighty spirits of old with the eternal problems of religion. The fundamental difference between the guidance which was sought by the older theology and that which is discovered by critical scholarship is this: The older theology took the doctrines of the Bible as authoritative formulae, and used them as rules by which to guide life. The critical theology studies the Bible to discover the way in which so triumphant a theology was developed, in order that we may worthily strive to work out in our day the best theology possible to us in the light of our total experience and knowledge.

## THE HISTORICITY OF THE APOSTOLIC DECREE

PROFESSOR CONRAD H. MOEHLMANN  
Rochester Theological Seminary, Rochester, N.Y.

Adventurous as well as balanced attempts have been made to reconcile the fifteenth chapter of Acts and Paul's summary in the second chapter of Galatians. As the commentaries on Acts and Galatians and histories of the apostolic age appear, the debate becomes more involved. The questions at issue constantly demand discussion. For the Apostolic Conference, so called, is of primary importance to any adequate appreciation of the apostolic era. There is a widespread conviction that the solutions hitherto attempted upon the basis of the usually accepted text have ended in failure. But many now agree that the essential point of difference that remains is the apostolic decree.<sup>1</sup> We propose to discuss the historicity of this resolution adopted at Jerusalem.

### I. CONTENDING INTERPRETATIONS OF THE DECREE

The decree is referred to in Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25. Several interpretations are proposed. The first is based upon what may be described as the "four-clause" text. It urges converts from among the Gentiles to abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication. The decree is then regarded as a food regulation, plus the strange addition of a moral restriction. This view represents the tradition supported by such manuscripts as  $\aleph$  B C, etc., and by the Alexandrian Fathers Clement and Origen. Another interpretation depends upon D, the Latin version, Irenaeus, Tertullian, etc. This form of text contains three clauses with the addition, as a rule, of the Golden Rule in negative form and a reference to the Spirit. The Gentiles are enjoined to conform to certain moral requirements.

<sup>1</sup> Harnack, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 1911, IV, 22.

A third interpretation accepts the four-clause text, but explains all of the clauses as different forms of idolatry.<sup>2</sup>

## II. THE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE FOUR-CLAUSE TEXT

The four-clause text is very ancient. Clement of Alexandria supports this reading. Nevertheless, the historicity of the decree in this form is very doubtful. To begin with the text, *πνικτοῦ* is indefinite, whereas the other words of the group are definite.<sup>3</sup> *πνικτοῦ* is always found in close proximity to *αἷμα*. It changes its position with the latter word. Some manuscripts of the Vulgate and some of the Fathers combine "blood" and "strangled," reading *sanguine suffocato* or an equivalent. It would seem that *πνικτοῦ* may not stand as a separate member of the list. Wellhausen has "decisively proved that *πνικτόν* is included in the prohibition of *αἷμα* and cannot stand as a separate member of the list."<sup>4</sup>

The accepted interpretation involves a peculiar unity. To associate a permanently valid moral restriction with temporary conciliatory requirements is not at all natural. And Harnack reminds us that "no one has yet been able to explain satisfactorily" this detail.<sup>5</sup>

The context is opposed to the assumption that the brethren passed a set of resolutions regarding meats. James urges (vs. 19) that Gentiles becoming Christians should not be troubled. Could he, then, a moment later, move the adoption of a measure which

<sup>2</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 60, offers a brief criticism of this view. Chase (*Hulsean Lectures*, 1902, pp. 96 f.) suggests another explanation. Blood and things strangled "refer to rites current among heathen Semites, blood possibly to the rite of blood-brotherhood, still known in the Lebanon and in some parts of Arabia; things strangled, to certain sacrifices referred to in Isaiah, possibly connected with mystic initiations. These practices are chosen for special prohibition, partly because they prevailed in Syria (the letter is addressed to churches in Antioch and Syria), partly because they were peculiarly abhorrent to Jewish feeling." The obvious criticism of this interpretation is that the decree was not intended for heathen Semites but for Greeks who had become Christians. The dispute originated in the Greek Christian church at Antioch. Moreover, the letter was taken by Paul to churches founded on the "first" missionary journey.

<sup>3</sup> Hilgenfeld, *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1899, pp. 389 ff.; G. Resch, *Texte u. Untersuchungen*, Bd. 28, 3, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 252.

<sup>5</sup> Harnack, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

would incalculably vex the Gentiles? James proves from the experience of Peter and by a quotation from the Old Testament that God has recognized a gentile Christianity apart from circumcision. Paul affirms in Galatians that the pillars at Jerusalem recognized a gentile Christianity independent of circumcision. Are we nevertheless to contradict not only Paul but also Peter and James by insisting that Jewish peculiarities were imposed upon the Gentiles? Only necessary things were to be laid upon the Gentiles. Did the early church regard legislation concerning food essential? Was abstention from non-kosher meat to be a distinguishing mark of the new society?

To insist that a food law was enacted at Jerusalem leads to absurdity. The question at issue at Jerusalem was the observance of the Mosaic law, especially with reference to circumcision. Here is a called meeting of the mother church eliminating the most characteristic label of Judaism, a rite associated with the promise given to Abraham and made eternally valid (Gen. 17:13, 14), only to impose upon the same Gentiles burdens three-fold heavier. A prescribed custom abolished! The lifelong practice of far more exacting and wearisome practices demanded! A conference in session to pass upon the validity of non-moral requirements of the Mosaic law reaches the marvelous conclusion that food restrictions are to obtain in the church of Him who said: There is nothing from without a man that going into him can defile him! (Mark 7:15). And Paul who asserts that religion is spiritual and ethical, that circumcision and its omission alike are valueless to one connected with Jesus, delivers the decrees to the gentile churches founded by him in order that they may avoid ceremonial uncleanness!<sup>6</sup>

The apostolic decree interpreted as a regulation regarding foods is not in harmony with the remainder of the New Testament. It is remarkable that Luke should not elsewhere refer to prohibited meats. The controversy in Acts and in Galatians turns upon circumcision. If a measure as specific as this decree was approved as a working hypothesis, some trace of it should be discoverable in subsequent events. The action of the mother church is unique.

<sup>6</sup> Acts 16:4.



Beyond this passage the New Testament is unfamiliar with proscribed foods. Witness the teaching of Jesus in Mark 7:1-23.<sup>7</sup> Paul is not conscious of any obligation to observe rules regarding meats. "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink," etc. (Col. 2:16-23). "Love is the fulfilment of the law" (Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:14). As Lake puts it, "It is clear that in this chapter (I Cor., chap. 10), St. Paul is either deliberately ignoring the Apostolic Decrees, or interpreting them as forbidding idolatry, *not as establishing a food law.*"<sup>8</sup> Consider this fragment of a verse from the Epistle to the Hebrews: "being only (with meats and drinks and divers washings) carnal ordinances, imposed until a time of reformation" (Heb. 9:10; cf. Heb. 13:9). The apostolic decree is the only passage in the entire New Testament requiring Gentiles to observe Jewish scruples concerning foods.

To interpret the four-clause text as a food law compels the acceptance of *εἰδωλόθυστα* in the sense of sacrificial flesh on sale in the markets. But Paul does not forbid the purchase of meat used in the sacrifice and on sale in the shops. If Resch is not in error, the Jews were nowhere forbidden to purchase such meat.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, *πνικτοῦ* is not found in the Old Testament and was not forbidden to the Jews. Indeed after an exhaustive investigation, Resch<sup>10</sup> reaches the conclusion that the term refers not to the flesh of animals, slaughtered or shot, that were not completely bled, but to the flesh of animals that met death without the loss of any blood. Lev. 17:10-16 contains no prohibition of eating things strangled (so Resch, Wiener, Sanday, and others). *πνικτόν* is not "Terminus der hebräischen und jüdischen Theologie."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Seeberg, *Die beiden Wege*; Resch, *Texte und Untersuchungen*, N.F., Bd. 13, pp. 37 ff.; Harnack, *Acts*, p. 255; cf. Matt. 23:1-36; Luke 11:37-52. We know that the words of Jesus possessed superlative authority in the early church. Matt. 23:3 and John 14:26 should have occurred to the adopters of a food rule.

<sup>8</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 51, note 2; cf. also Forbes (Moffatt, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 307), "It is conceivable that Paul might have agreed to a number of concessions for the sake of peace and harmony, but 'that he consented to, or was party to, a demand that his converts should observe these four legal conditions is not only disproven by his own clear words, but by the absence of any such precept in his letters to the gentile churches on this matter.'"

<sup>9</sup> G. Resch, *Das Aposteldekret*, p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Resch, pp. 23 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Resch, p. 34.

In fact, the Jews, as late as the tenth century of our era, were still permitted to purchase *πνικτόν*. Hence it is not easy to explain why the apostles should have insisted upon what Jews themselves would not have demanded. There is no evidence that the Jewish party in the Christian church at Jerusalem was interested in "things strangled." It requires a huge imagination to concede that they would have surrendered on the question of circumcision and have shown such permanent interest in the matter "of extracting blood from slaughtered animals."<sup>12</sup>

Advocates of the accepted text are obliged to antedate the controversy between Peter and Paul at Antioch. Sanday<sup>13</sup> frankly admits that "there is a *prima facie* difficulty in harmonizing what is said about the scene at Antioch in Galatians with the assumption that there could be anything to prevent Peter from eating with Gentiles, supposing that the terms of the decree were observed." This problem is then readily solved by simply dogmatically affirming that the scene at Antioch preceded the Council of Jerusalem. But Paul should then have referred to it before narrating his experience with the pillars at Jerusalem. Paul does not imply that his collision with Peter was prior to the Jerusalem conference. His summary has been brief and rapid but chronological. In the absence of any indications that he is departing from the chronological order, it would be unwise to accept the proposed solution.

Another method of procedure is to conjecture that Luke has antedated the decree<sup>14</sup>—the decree, it is alleged, came into existence some time between Paul's composition of Galatians and his arrival at Jerusalem (Acts 21:25). The decree would then be the work of James and his party. But Clemen, insisting that the decree is not genuine, nevertheless concludes that it was certainly inserted at the right place.

The supporters of the usual interpretation are obliged to assert that Paul's consent to the decree was a passive consent. But the

<sup>12</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of Paul*, p. 55.

<sup>13</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of Paul*, p. 50, disposes of Sanday's argument against the trustworthiness of D and Irenaeus.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Moffatt, *Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 307 f.

resolution was read at Antioch and Paul himself transmitted it to the Greek churches founded by him (cf. Acts 16:4). This point is completely neglected by Sanday. And there is no data to warrant the conclusion that the decree was intended as a temporary measure and prescribed for a limited area (cf. 16:4; 21:25).

### III. THE GENUINENESS OF THE "WESTERN" READING<sup>15</sup>

We have offered sufficient argument to make it plain that the text of the apostolic decree requires re-examination. The solution of the problem will not be discovered until we rightly value the Bezan readings of the passages in dispute. At present the Westcott-Hort theory of the text of the New Testament still holds the field against all opposition—at least in England and the United States. This theory holds that the text of the New Testament (prior to the middle of the third century) consisted of two main branches—"Western" and "Neutral." In the neighborhood of 300 A.D. an eclectic text was produced by working over the existing texts and by conjectural emendations. Hort described the "Western" text as characterized by boldness of paraphrase and a tendency to wander into wider and wider variation. He neglected the readings of the "Western" text, except in a few instances which he described as "Western non-interpolations" or "Neutral interpolations." But of late there has been a rehearing on the "Western" text. Its name is seen to be inappropriate. Witnesses to this type of text are found in the West, in Africa, and in the extreme East. It includes "all ancient unrevised texts." It is found in Origen and Clement as well as in Justin Martyr, Marcion, Tatian, and Irenaeus. It can be traced back to sub-apostolic times. It was the common text of the church about the middle of the second century. It is no longer safe "to condemn a reading off-hand because the authorities for it are of the 'Western type.'" Every "Western" reading must be considered on its own merits. The general results of the criticism of the Westcott-Hort view of the "Western" text is the recognition of the fact

<sup>15</sup> Hilgenfeld and G. Resch have done pioneer work in behalf of this interpretation. Harnack accepted their conclusion and defends it in his *Acts*. Lake also approves of it.

that "Westcott and Hort (largely from lack of evidence) underestimated the possibility that a consensus of the Old Latin and the Old Syriac may give us a really primitive text, even when opposed to the great uncials" (Lake, *Textual Criticism*, p. 98).

Although D exhibits a "curious, eccentric, wandering text, conspicuous for paraphrase and interpolation," it is generally agreed that it sometimes preserves very ancient readings. D seems to preserve the original reading in, e.g., Acts 11:20 and 13:8. Most accept the instance in Acts 11:20, and scholars of such opposite tendencies as Zahn and Clemen and Harris defend D in 13:8, and these examples could easily be increased. It is no longer safe and orthodox always to rule D out of court.

With this brief reference to the increasing importance that is attaching to the "Western" text, we come to the question of reading in Acts 15:29.<sup>16</sup> There are three main types of text: the Eastern, Western, and conflate forms. Of course there are exceedingly important variations within these forms. But very broadly speaking, the principal uncials support the Eastern form; Beza and the Western Fathers witness to the "Western" form. According to the Eastern reading, the decree must be interpreted as a regulation concerning foods. It is the "four-clause" text.

The "Western" text omits or modifies *καὶ πικτόν* or its equivalent and may therefore be described as the "three-clause" text. Another characteristic of the "Western" reading is the addition of the Golden Rule in negative form and a reference to the Spirit. Dd, Athous, Sahid., Irenaeus, Porphyry, Gigas, Augustine, Tertullian, Cyprian, Pacian, Jerome, etc., omit *πικτόν*. The Vulgate; Cyril of Jerusalem, and Gaudentius combine *πικτόν* with *αἷμα* to form one idea.

We incline to the opinion that the Golden Rule is a "Western" insertion. Inserted where it is, the Golden Rule "breaks the connection between the relative *ὃς* *ὧν* and its antecedents and so makes the whole sentence impossible." It is wanting in Acts 21:25. If the Golden Rule were original, the transformation of

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Resch, pp. 7-19; Sanday, pp. 320-23; Harnack, *Acts*, pp. 251 ff.; Lake, *The Earlier Epistles*, pp. 48 f.

the decree as a summary of moral precepts into a food law would scarcely have occurred.<sup>17</sup>

The "Western" text tends to paraphrase and to addition, not to omission. But in our instance it actually omits *πνικτόν*. How shall we explain this omission? Interpolations characterize D. Lake<sup>18</sup> shows conclusively that "there is no possibility of alleging any motive" for the omission of *πνικτόν*. The very circles that read the three-clause text also observed a food law that "mentioned" things strangled." To assume a *deliberate* scribal omission as early as the second century is rather precarious. And to omit *πνικτόν* was to purposely alter the plain meaning of the decree. Would it not be a more plausible explanation to regard the appearance of *πνικτόν* as almost a case of gradual "neutral" addition of "Western non-interpolation"?<sup>19</sup> The "Western" reading could be accepted without doing violence to the theory of Westcott and Hort.

To establish the "Western" text for the decree beyond a doubt it will be necessary to interpret it and to trace the history of the decree.

If the "Western" readings are assumed, the Council that met at Jerusalem imposed upon the Gentiles the observance of a few fundamental rules of morals. It did not prohibit the consumption of certain meats. *Εἰδωλοθύτων* may refer to sacrificial flesh on sale in the markets or to idolatry; see I Cor. 8:1 ff.; 10:19 f.; Rev. 14:20. The context and the remainder of the New Testament require the interpretation of idolatry.

*αἷμα* may denote partaking of blood or shedding of blood; may be dietary or moral. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament *αἷμα* is repeatedly used in the sense of murder. Resch has certainly shown this. See Lev. 17:4; Num. 35:27; Matt. 23:30; Rev. 6:10; also Eccles. 34:25; Pausanias v. 1, 6;

<sup>17</sup> So Harnack, Lake, Sanday. But Hilgenfeld and Resch maintain that the Golden Rule is original. Steinmetz (p. 50) refuses to decide the question. Lake, *Earlier Epistles*, p. 52, regards the addition of the Golden Rule as due to the desire to make the interpretation of the decree as a moral rule, definite.

<sup>18</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 50.

<sup>19</sup> *Versus Sanday, Theologische Studien*, Theo. Zahn dargestellt, p. 323.

Plato, *Laws* 872DE, etc.<sup>20</sup> The prohibition of murder is neither strange nor superfluous. Exposure and slaying of children, abortion, murder of slaves were not infrequent. And murder might well include "every injury to the life of one's neighbor" (see I Pet. 4:15; I John 3:15; Rev. 22:15; Jas. 4:2). The gentile Christians were at the very beginning of their Christian career. They were constantly in danger of relapsing into sin (cf. Gal. 5:20; I Cor. 5:1 ff.). More than a century later Tertullian says that *pudicitia* is rare and murder not unusual. The apostles, then, enjoined upon the gentile Christians the necessity of being on their guard against idolatry, adultery, and murder.

The history of the decree is the best argument in favor of the "Western" reading. The Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists are unacquainted with "regulations concerning meats binding upon Christians."<sup>21</sup> The earliest Eastern Fathers to interpret the decree as a prohibition of meats are Clement and Origen, and their exegesis is based upon the accepted text.<sup>22</sup> The entire Western church regarded the apostolic decree as an ethical summary. Even fathers like Tertullian who insist upon abstention from blood and things strangled interpret the decree as an ethical principle. In *Apol.* 9; *de Monog.* 5; *de Jejun.* 4, Tertullian mentions the prohibition of blood, but does not appeal to the decree. He appeals to I Corinthians and Revelation when insisting upon abstention from flesh offered to idols (cf. *de Spec.* 13; *de Cor.* 10; *de Jejun.* 15). In *de Pud.* 12, Tertullian refers the three mortal sins to the Jerusalem rescript: "Sufficient it is, that in this place withal there has been preserved to adultery and fornication the post of honor between idolatry and murder: for the interdict upon blood we shall understand to be an interdict much more upon human blood." Tertullian insists upon abstention from blood and from things strangled, but does not quote the decree as his authority. The decree is in his opinion simply a proof-text for the three ecclesiastical mortal sins. Cyprian<sup>23</sup> translates *εἰδωλοθύτων* by *ab idololatriis*. Pacian traces the three mortal sins to Acts 15:20. Augustine informs us that some in his day were accustomed to

<sup>20</sup> Resch, *Das Aposteldekret*, pp. 42 f.

<sup>22</sup> Harnack, pp. 253 f.

<sup>21</sup> Harnack, p. 259; Resch, pp. 43 ff.

<sup>23</sup> Resch, pp. 43 f.

trace the origin of the *tria crimina mortifera* to the verse in Acts.<sup>24</sup> In the Western Fathers there is no trace of prohibition of meats based upon the apostolic resolution. And it is exceedingly significant that the ethical exegesis of the apostolic decree made its influence felt in the ecclesiastical determination of mortal sins.

The selection of these three commandments by Jewish Christians is not a unique but a very intelligent proceeding. Resch<sup>25</sup> argues that they were intended to forbid all non-moral conduct. They served as a *compendia disciplinae* (*de Pud.* 12). They were not at first viewed quantitatively. They covered the entire sphere of wrongdoing. Idolatry could refer to all manner of sins against God; *πορνεία*, to all sins against the body; *αἵμα*, to sins against one's neighbor. There are a number of catalogues of sins in the New Testament, e.g., Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:24-32; Col. 3:5-8; Eph. 5:3-5; I Pet. 2:1; II Pet. 2:9-14; Rev. 17:3; cf. also, *Didache* 3:1-6; 5:1 f.; Bar., chap. 20, etc. The roots of all these summaries seem to lead to the three fundamental sins of Acts 15:29.<sup>26</sup> The Talmud also mentions these three sins as principal. It is also a telling point that the Sibyllines<sup>27</sup> select abstinence from idolatry, shedding of blood, and immorality as the marks of a good life.<sup>28</sup>

The ethical interpretation of the apostolic decree is in harmony with the teaching of Jesus, of Paul, and of the remainder of the New Testament, is historically defensible, is the only exegesis of the passage recognized by the Western church until the time of Augustine, shows that an intelligent working hypothesis was adopted at the Jerusalem gathering, made its influence felt in the ecclesiastical determination of mortal sins, is textually supported by Western types of text and by early patristic testimony. We therefore conclude that the original decree of the apostolic meeting at Jerusalem has been preserved to us in a "Western" reading. The result of the deliberations at Jerusalem over the theoretical recognition of the Gentiles was the adoption of a broad

<sup>24</sup> Migne, 34, 994.

<sup>25</sup> Resch, pp. 78 ff.

<sup>26</sup> See Resch's interesting comments, pp. 108 ff.

<sup>27</sup> *Or. Sib.* iv. 24-34, 162-70.

<sup>28</sup> Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 56 f.

ethical law. The attitude which Jewish Christians should practically adopt toward gentile Christians remained to be determined by further reflection and by tragic experiences.<sup>29</sup>

#### IV. THE ORIGIN OF THE "EASTERN" TEXT

The question that remains is how *πνικτόν* crept into the text of the main uncials.<sup>30</sup> Regulations concerning meats originated in the East.<sup>31</sup> They had been transmitted to the West before the end of the second century. The epistle from Lyons and Vienna is the most ancient Christian reference witnessing to a Christian custom of abstaining from blood.<sup>32</sup> But both in the East and the West food laws arose independently of the apostolic decree. Nothing could make this more evident than the fact that Irenaeus who insists upon distinctions with reference to foods, interpreted the decree as a code "of ethical precepts."<sup>33</sup> The colonists at Lyons were observing food rules and also reading a three-clause text. Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria also bear witness to a Christian food code. But the Christian food regulation, except in Alexandria, is not associated with the apostolic decree.

The Christian custom of abstaining from what has been strangled and from sacrifices offered to idols seems connected with their theory of demonology.

Athenagoras (*Legat* c. 26) says: "They who draw men to idols are the aforesaid demons, who are eager for the blood of the sacrifices and lick them." Clement of Alexandria (*Paed.* III, 8) warns Christians to avoid things sacrificed to idols because of the demons to which they are dedicated. Origen (*vs. Celsus* VIII, 30) remarks: As to things strangled, we are forbidden to partake of them, because the blood is still in them; and blood, especially the odor arising from the blood, is said to be

<sup>29</sup> Occasionally an appeal is taken to the so-called Noachic regulations as corresponding to the *four-clause* text of the apostolic decree. Lake, p. 55, shows that the resemblance is closer to the *three-clause* text.

<sup>30</sup> See especially Resch, pp. 151-70; Lake, pp. 50 ff.; Harnack, *Acts*, pp. 260 f.

<sup>31</sup> So Bockenhoff, Harnack, Resch.

<sup>32</sup> Eus., *H.E.*, V, 1, 26: "How could those eat children who do not think it lawful to taste the blood even of irrational animals?"

<sup>33</sup> Iren., *Adv. Haer.*, III, 12, 14.



the food of demons. Perhaps, then, if we were to eat of strangled animals we might have such spirits feed along with us.<sup>34</sup>

There is then this early Christian prejudice against blood. To this we must add the brevity and ambiguity of the decree.<sup>35</sup> The three-clause text contained two words which would very readily be misunderstood, viz., *εἰδωλόθυτα* and *αἷμα*. The resolution was indefinite, and could be interpreted as a moral law or a dietary restriction. Its meaning came to depend upon the inclination of the reader. What prevented the scribe who viewed the concise decree as a food regulation and who was prejudiced against blood from adding "things strangled" as a marginal note to explain *αἷμα*? Then there would be no doubt that *αἷμα* signified, not murder, but "meat in which the blood had been retained." Soon the marginal gloss crept into the text and completely transformed the original significance of the decree. The changed text is first met with in Alexandria. Thence the transformed decree gradually found its way into the main uncials. But as late as the time of Augustine, the West had not adopted the erroneous interpretation.

After eighteen centuries an examination of the text has yielded the correct interpretation of this important verse.<sup>36</sup> This result should enlist our sympathy and interest in behalf of the toilers in the field of New Testament interpretation, and should make us more enthusiastic concerning the textual criticism of the New Testament.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> See further Tert., *Apol.*, c. 22; Justin Martyr, *Apol.*, I, 12 ("I am persuaded that these things are the doing of evil spirits, who exact sacrifices and worship even from those who live contrary to reason"); Aristides *Apol.* 15.

<sup>35</sup> See especially Lake, *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 51 f., and Harnack, *Acts*.

<sup>36</sup> One of the interesting facts with reference to the history of the interpretation of the apostolic decree is that Harnack who in 1899 wrote a monograph in favor of the four-clause text was obliged to recant a decade later because of the studies of G. Resch.

<sup>37</sup> Among those who favor the three-clause text are Hilgenfeld, G. Resch, Harnack, Lake, Steinmetz.

## THE PROBLEM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

---

PROFESSOR KEMPER FULLERTON  
Oberlin Theological Seminary, Oberlin, Ohio

---

### IV

But when the dogmatic authority of the Old Testament has been rejected, is there anything left worth fighting for? Indeed there is. Now begins to emerge in clear relief the immense *historical* importance of the Old Testament. The Old Testament contains those documents which are the indispensable sources for our knowledge of the foundation and significance of our religion. They thus have a unique historical significance. The Fathers employed arguments in defense of the Old Testament against the Gnostics which have no weight with us. Nevertheless, they were right in their main contentions and the Gnostics were wrong. The Fathers recognized the fact that Christianity is a historical religion. As such it strikes its roots deep into the soil of the Past. The Old Testament is its great tap-root. If the Gnostics had succeeded, the ax would have been laid at the root of the tree. If the Old Testament had been cut away Christianity would have been sublimated into philosophical speculations, as the history of Gnosticism clearly showed, and the multitudes cannot breathe in the high altitudes of pure philosophy.

But it may be objected that this is just the sort of an academic consideration which one might look for from a prig of a professor, with his far-away interest in origins and his failure to appreciate the vital needs of men today. But wait a moment. Let us look at the *spiritualized doctrine of inspiration* that grows out of the new conceptions. On the traditional theory, inspiration was seen to be an impersonal, non-moral thing. The question of inspiration was insensibly identified with the question of the inspiration of a book. On the historical theory of the Old Testament, the question is shifted away from the book to the men behind the book. As soon as that is done inspiration is personalized and therefore moralized.

On the dogmatic theory the chief function of inspiration is the authentication of truth. Things in the Bible are true because the pen-men of the Holy Ghost, as they have been called (that is, the biblical writers are stenographers, not authors, on this theory) wrote them down at the dictation of the Spirit. This position is absurd. Moral and spiritual truth is self-authenticating. It does not need inspired authentication. As for historical facts, such authentication is as irrelevant as for the facts of chemistry or physics. On the historical theory, the function of inspiration is the discovery of truth when the soul in contact with its God can discern the outlines of the spiritual world, can feel the reality of the things unseen. In other words, inspiration is a great spiritual experience. It is something human and vital. This means that the authority of the inspired prophet is no longer something wholly external and therefore tyrannical, as it was on the old dogmatic view. It is the authority of a great throbbing human experience which may be duplicated, at least in a measure, in the experience of others, and hence no longer remains an external authority.

In the next place the Old Testament read from the historical, instead of from the dogmatic, point of view is everywhere shimmering in a new beauty, is everywhere instinct with life and power. There are the stories of Genesis, for example. On the dogmatic view they must be construed as actual history. The result is as deadly as it would be to study Homer solely with reference to the historicity of the Trojan war. We might gain a few shreds and patches of history, but that would be a beggarly exchange for the poetry we had lost. There was once an old Greek teacher who used to insist, when Homer was being studied, that *chalkos* should always be translated "bronze," not "brass." That was more important than the pathos of Andromache's farewell to Hector. On the dogmatic view, the correctness of the etymology of Abraham's name becomes a matter of faith. The historical view sees in these stories not authentic history but legend. Every canon of literary criticism demands this recognition. Does this discredit them? On the contrary, only when they are so interpreted can they reveal themselves to the interpreter in their true beauty and significance. Construed on the dogmatic theory as veritable

history, they must subject themselves, poor things, to the tests of veritable history. They must be compared with Grote or Busolt or even Thucydides. How eminently unfair to them this is, is obvious.

As legends they belong to a distinct, well-recognized species of literature which develops at a certain stage in the history of every people and expresses the inmost soul of the people in its youth. Of them it may be said with added meaning, "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." - To force the dreams of youth into the syllogisms of maturity is brutal. To test the legends of Genesis by the works of modern science is a barbarous anachronism. It is only when the folk-lore of Israel is compared with the folk-lore of other peoples that justice can be done to it. When such a comparison is made, we begin to realize for the first time the immeasurable superiority of these folk-tales of the ancient Hebrews to the tales of all other peoples of antiquity. They do not have, it is true, the beautiful rainbow colors of the Greek mythology. No lovely Iris, no rosy-fingered Dawn, no far-darting Apollo, no Aphrodite rising from the foam, gleam through these legends. But they have a beauty of form, a refinement of feeling, a naïve gravity which are as exquisite in their own way as any tale of Hellas. And they have something which Greek mythology, by the very terms of it, does not possess: a purity in their conception of God which has banished the grotesque, the gross, and the defiling, and which has surrounded these child's stories with all the clouds of solemn glory, the mystery and awe of life that properly belong to every child. Because of this the stories of Genesis remain the best introduction for the child into the deeper things of the religious life and it is sad to think how many of us are depriving our children of this priceless heritage.<sup>1</sup>

Or look again at the first chapter of Genesis, which, by the way, is not, in its present form, to be interpreted as folk-lore. On the dogmatic view the chapter must be geologically correct. On the

<sup>1</sup> If one wishes to form a judgment upon the literary suitability of the legends of Genesis for the child, let him make a comparison of style, vocabulary, and subject-matter of Jacob's dream at Bethel with the dream of Florian in Walter Pater's *Child in the House*. The one is as simple and elemental as Haydn's music. The other is as full of subtlety as the music of DuBussy.

basis of the geological interpretation demanded by the dogmatic view, the church has opposed many of the most important discoveries of modern science. In the confusion of the struggle the spiritual import of the chapter has been almost totally ignored. On the historical view of the Bible the geology of Genesis is seen to be erroneous. Its physical conceptions are essentially those of Babylonian priestly science and no one would think of rectifying the findings of Greenwich or the Lick Observatory by the views entertained in the temple of Esag-ila. But when the common physical background of the Babylonian and Hebrew cosmologies is once recognized, the religious superiority of the first chapter of Genesis is pushed into the foreground. In the Babylonian epic of Creation, with which Gen., chap. 1, is usually compared, the interest is scientific and political. It will tell how the world was created, but it describes the creation in such a way as to give all glory to Marduk, the god of Babylon, and to support the political supremacy which Babylon gained at the time of the Hammurabi Dynasty by the cosmological significance attributed to Marduk, Babylon's god. The purpose of Gen., chap. 1, is religious. Incidentally it teaches science, too, the accepted science of its day. But this is not its purpose. Its purpose is to teach religion in the terms of the science of its day. In so doing the writer is the forerunner of Clement of Alexandria, of Origen, of all the great Christian thinkers who have sought to interpret the deepest truths of our religion in the terms of accepted knowledge and thus connect them vitally with life. When we turn from the aim of the two cosmologies to their details, how superior is the Hebrew account again seen to be! In the Babylonian account there is first a chaos and then a birth of the gods. In the Hebrew account God is no "tawny lion pawing to be free" of the primeval elements. Chaos is there, no doubt, but its troubled waters are not fiercely beating against the barriers of the heavenly world and threatening to overthrow them. God is absolutely untrammelled and transcendent. In the Babylonian account there is the grossest polytheism. The gods in their assemblage get drunk most royally. In the Hebrew account the old assemblage of the gods may still, possibly, be seen in the background (in the much discussed "we" of vs. 26),

but the conception that dominates the chapter is the conception of the oneness of God. In the one account creation is described in the most mythological terms. It is a struggle between the gods of light and order against the monstrous powers of darkness and anarchy. In Genesis God speaks and it is done. There is no struggle, no effort here, only the calm of absolute power, the effortlessness of omnipotence. The exalted religious conceptions of God have even had a restraining influence upon the physical conceptions which Gen., chap. 1 shares with the older account. All the original exaggerations and grotesqueness have been eliminated. At this point a genuine scientific value can be vindicated for the Hebrew cosmology if we look for it in the right place. The writer views the world as an ordered world, a kosmos. Each stage of the creation develops after its kind, in accordance with its own laws. There is no caprice or magic here, no marvel except the marvel of ordered beauty, the beauty of science to which religion has given a spiritual meaning.

Let us look at one other instance of the change effected by the new attitude toward Scripture. The dogmatic view of prophecy laid all the emphasis upon the predictive element. This it felt compelled to do because the New Testament writers themselves laid the emphasis upon this element. But the historical method of interpreting the Old Testament compels us to admit, what Calvin already seemed to realize in a measure, that the coincidences which are found between prophecy and specific events in Jesus' life are illusory. They can be pointed out only by means of the allegorical method which the New Testament writers, as children of their day, naturally availed themselves of. (Remember, it was at that time the approved method of elucidating sacred books.) But the emphasis upon prediction ignores the moral significance of prophecy. In order to secure the required meaning for the prophetic utterances which would enable them to be regarded as specific predictions concerning Jesus of Nazareth, they must be isolated from their contexts and from the historical occasions which gave rise to them. This means that they lose all moral significance for those to whom they were originally spoken. Construed as predictions, the prophecies were originally enigmas, a term which

the Fathers were significantly fond of applying to them, and the prophets must have been to those whom they addressed as men speaking with tongues. Paul says that he would rather speak five words with his understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue. The historical view of prophecy follows the lead of St. Paul. Instead of the prophetic enigma it substitutes the prophetic sermon. Instead of predictions as ambiguous as the Delphic oracles with which Clement of Alexandria expressly compares them, it substitutes the conception of prophecy as a great organic movement of spiritual reform, developing through the centuries. Instead of emphasizing Isa. 7:14 ("A virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call his name Immanuel") and ruthlessly slaying the meaning of the passage, as even Calvin did, in order to present it as a sacrifice to the dogmatic theory of Scripture, the historical interpretation points to the verse just preceding, "If you do not believe, you will not be established." It is that verse that gives to the meeting between Ahab and Isaiah its permanent significance.

I do not intend to break down the connection between prophecy and fulfilment when I suggest that the time passed has sufficed us to look for the fulfilments of predictions or to delight in the isolated correspondences which they imply. There is, I apprehend, a more vital connection between Jesus and prophecy than the older view has usually suggested. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, not because he fulfils predictions—that has no moral significance—but because he fulfils prophetic ideals. That has the deepest moral significance. And what are these ideals? The answer to this question leads to the very heart of the Old Testament and it is here that we come to realize its abiding value.

The first of these ideals is the thought of God as a God of the Kosmos, one and transcendent. This finds its classic formulation in the first chapter of Genesis. This chapter stands out as the magna charta of ethical monotheism, a bulwark against the polytheism and the pantheism of the ancient world, and all the ethical and spiritual confusion which they inevitably produced. The second ideal is the conception of the God of the Kosmos as the God of history. To the former conception parallels may be found

in other nations, though vastly inferior to it in dignity and purity. The latter conception is probably unique among the religions of antiquity. As a God of history the God of the prophets is a person in a sense in which no mere nature god or pale derivative of astral speculation is capable of being. He is a living God, no wraith. As personally interested in human history he is in moral relations with mankind. He is a God of righteousness, no capricious jinn. At first, it is true, his primary relationships were conceived to be with Israel with whom he entered into a covenant. A strange idea, this idea of a covenant! But the more one ponders it, the more its ethical significance is realized. And this idea seems to have been an original element in the national religion. But, as time went on, the universalistic implications, which were probably present from the beginning in Israel's conception of God, were more and more fully revealed. Jehovah brings Israel out of Egypt, but also the Philistines from Caphtor and the Aramaeans from Kir. In all these widening relationships He does not lose his concreteness. His will is not merely the symbol for what is. He is as vitally personal as ever, and his righteousness is even more intensely realized. He will punish the sinning nation wherever it may be found. But as a God of history, a personal ethical power, his relationships are not confined to past or present, for history has a future also. He becomes the God of faith and hope. Thus the prophetic conception of God as the God of history culminates in that sublime and optimistic philosophy of history which we call Messianic prophecy, in which all the tangled threads of human life are seen to be finally woven into the banner of the church triumphant.

There is yet another ideal, in some respects the most important of all. The God who is the creator of the world, the God who is the God of human history, a personal, ethical power in the movements of the nations, is the God of the individual conscience as well. As gradually all nationalistic conceptions of God were transcended and in Second Isa. and Gen., chap. 1, the universalistic conception of him received its classic formulation, we observe the corollary of these ideals also emerging. Our relationship to a world-God, who is a God of righteousness, cannot be determined by racial connection or by climate, by birth or by inheritance. It



can be determined only by our own wills moving out spontaneously toward his will. Individualism,<sup>2</sup> which is the final stage in the spiritualization of religion, appears in striking forms in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and experiences its transfiguration in Jonah and in Job.

These are the ideals of the religion of Israel as developed by its great prophetic teachers. These are the ideals which Christ fulfils by supplying the thought of fatherhood to the thought of the creator, by supplementing the ideal of righteousness with the ideal of love, by insisting on the worth of the individual soul even to the point that the whole world is to be sacrificed to save it. These ideals of prophecy are true, everlastingly true, and no rejection of a dogmatic theory of Scripture can undermine them. It is these ideals which give to the Old Testament its true authority and abiding worth. It must be frankly admitted that the transition from the old theories to the new costs something. It seems at times as if everything were being given up. So it seemed to many in the Reformation when the only authority with which the people were acquainted, namely the authority of the church, was broken down. So it seemed to Job, who took the step which is the supreme effort of vital religion and maintained the truth of his convictions against the dogmas of his day. For a time it seemed as if he had lost everything. God threatened to become to him only a cruel demon. But if this greatest Protestant of the Old Testament, this champion of the rights of the individual conscience against the authority of tradition as represented by the dogma of his friends, had not ventured all, and denied the God in whom he had once believed, he would never have found the God of righteousness and love. If he had never left the old trail, he would not have discovered that mountain top of spiritual experience from which he obtained the vision of the world to come, where truth is vindicated and faith secured against all doubt forever.

<sup>2</sup> Individualism in religion is not to be confounded with Egoism. The former is perfectly compatible with social responsibilities. The latter is not.

## THE PROPHETS AS MODELS FOR THE PREACHER

PROFESSOR ALEX. R. GORDON  
Presbyterian College, Montreal, Canada

One of the most conspicuous gains of modern Old Testament scholarship is the rediscovery of the prophets. For centuries these were but honored names, the bearers of certain golden words that shone out lustrous over the ages, while their own personalities remained in shadow. But now the prophets stand forth in the clear light of history, as the really great figures of the older Covenant, the men through whose word and influence above all else the vision broadened toward the perfect day. The place they occupied in ancient Israel corresponds broadly with that of the preacher of the gospel. A study of the ideals they upheld, and the spirit in which they carried forward their work, may thus prove helpful to those intrusted with this supreme commission in our age.

A brief glance at the names borne by the prophet may suggest at the outset what he really was and is. The widest in its range, a word found occasionally in the historical literature, is *'ish 'elohim*, "man of God." The prophet is, therefore, in a special sense the friend of the living God, one consecrated also, heart and soul, to his service. The more spiritual aspect of this intimacy is emphasized by the old word *rô'eh* or "seer." One cannot, it is true, claim for the original seers the deep spirituality of later prophets. They were more nearly akin to the augurs or diviners of other nations, men who interpreted the will of heaven by various omens or signs. And probably their gifts of insight were applied more frequently to quite mundane affairs, like the whereabouts of lost asses, than to the weightier matters of the Kingdom. The name appears, indeed, to have fallen into discredit. Yet the essential idea involved in it was taken up and consecrated afresh by the prophets. Thus Amos uses the very stem *ra'ah* for his seeing of his visions. And, though the specific term *rô'eh* was avoided, the

nearly related *hōzeh* or "gazer" was freely applied to the prophets. It was, indeed, the *hāzōn* or "vision" that made a man the prophet of God. The prophet is thus essentially a seer, one who has stood in the council-chamber of the Eternal and gazed on things almost too wonderful for utterance. And yet the prophet had to tell out what he saw. This more outward side of his activity is indicated by the parallel term *nābî*, the technical word for "prophet." This term is most probably derived from the old Semitic root for "bubbling up." The prophet, consequently, is one whose words pour forth with eager, impetuous, irresistible force. The first appearance of the prophetic bands in Israel is in perfect harmony with the root sense of the word. The prophets that sweep across the pages of Samuel and Kings are ecstasies, men lifted out of themselves by the spirit of enthusiasm for Yahweh and his cause, so completely, indeed, that they seemed no other than madmen to their more sober-minded fellows. The great prophetic figures of the later Kingdom stood immeasurably above these excited, frenzied bands. Yet in them, too, was the same inward compulsion. Those who had seen the vision of the King in his beauty were constrained to tell it out to their people. As Jeremiah says, the word of God was like a fire in their bones, which burned till it found expression.

In both respects the prophets set the type for all true preaching. Behind all our public utterances there must be the vision of God and truth; else our words will become formal and unreal, mere phrases that cannot reach the heart. And if there be this vision, our words will come forth with a certain irresistible impulse. This is by no means to be identified with fiery eloquence or easily flowing rhetoric. The prophets of Israel were not all orators of the stamp of an Isaiah. Among them were found also gentle spirits like Hosea and Jeremiah, for whom utterance was a pain almost intolerable. The prophet of today may be as weak in speech as these men felt themselves to be, and may be called to labor all his days in some quiet, obscure sphere of service, where he has no opportunity to play a large part in the coming of the Kingdom. But if he has his vision of things eternal, and speaks out of the heart what he has seen and known, his words will carry

the same conviction as passed from the prophets of old. They have come from the heart, and will likewise go to the heart.

From this it follows that the prophets were true to themselves and their own experience of God. They form a golden link running through the history of Revelation. Yet perhaps no such succession of men were more widely apart in character and word. The stern, unbending Amos preached of the day of the Lord and his righteousness. The broken heart of Hosea poured forth words of love and grace. The kingly figure of Isaiah thrilled his hearers with his glorious visions of God's sovereign holiness. The democratic Micah concerned himself mainly with the simple duties of life. Jeremiah turned men's thoughts to the new covenant of the spirit. And Deutero-Isaiah came to the despondent exiles with the good tidings of comfort and salvation. The range of their preaching may thus have been narrowed. But just because of their narrowness the waters were irresistible in depth and swiftness. And thus, too, their volume increased with the ages. Each prophet emphasized one aspect of the divine character. Thus his infinite fulness came to be understood in ever richer measure. And the eyes of the prophet were steadily fixed on the broadening revelation of the future. The true prophet was always a progressive. He might call men back to the old paths; but this was not in order to keep them standing still, but to send them forward, and still forward, on the ways of righteousness. He himself was invariably to be found in the van. He recognized, indeed, his spiritual unity with the older prophets, and studied their words with zealous interest. But he would be no parrot voice repeating their oracles. The broad distinction between the true and false prophets was, in fact, that the false harped forever on the same old string, stealing their words from the greater men of old, or even from one another, while the true prophets gave from their spiritual treasury things both new and old. Nor did they hesitate to lift the prophetic tradition, if need were, to higher planes. Amos and Hosea refused to be bound by Elisha's lower ideals of morality, and made the very deeds of bloodshed which he commanded in the name of God the cause of the fiery visitation that was about to fall on the people. And Jeremiah shrunk not

from denouncing as false prophets the men who held fast to Isaiah's great faith in the inviolability of Zion. The link that bound the true prophets was no hard-and-fast likeness in word, but a real spiritual harmony that allowed for endless diversity of expression.

The prophet of today must be as true to himself as these men were. He will not cut himself off from the great traditions of preaching, nor need he fear to be found studying the words of the master-preachers both of yesterday and today. Exponents of other arts go to the masters for insight and inspiration. And in the world of preaching the prophets have set us the same example. Only the preacher must be himself, and must assimilate the thoughts and style of others in order to perfect his own. That which counts most in preaching—in our own age as in the prophets'—is the personal note that comes from sincere conviction and experience. And for the same reason the preacher of today must be as progressive as the prophets were. God is still unveiling himself in as many ways as of old. He may have given us the full light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, but we are yet far from having exhausted the meaning of this revelation. Each age has seen some new vision of truth and holiness in that face. And on us too fresh rays of his glory are shining. The true prophet is he whose eyes are open to the growing light, who believes that the Spirit of God is in the forward march of truth, and who takes his place loyally in the ranks of those who follow the call of the Spirit.

In keeping with the intense reality of the prophets' preaching is its practical appeal. We never find the prophets beating about the bush, contenting themselves with general phrases, or pointlessly denouncing the sins of other times. They were men of their own age, who faced the situation that immediately confronted them, and spoke forth their words of warning, hope, or comfort in direct relation to the needs of the time. Thus their preaching took on many different notes. We may thus learn from them to blend the accents of melting love and pity with the stern call of righteousness, to unite the serious responsibilities of the watchman with the tender care of the shepherd or pastor, and to lead men in reverent adoration to the presence-chamber of the Holy

One, even while we exalt his fatherly love and goodness. The prophets can teach us also how to link the personal appeal of the evangelist with the larger demand for social justice. It was, indeed, the latter element that bulked most largely in their preaching. The efflorescence of prophecy coincided with the brilliant national developments of the reigns of Jeroboam II and Uzziah, when the individual counted for little more than an isolated atom of the nation. And the religious ideal that inspired men like Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah was that of a righteous, pure, and holy nation. The individual emerged into full personal consciousness mainly as the result of the Exile; and now it was the duty of prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel to lead the bruised and sin-stricken individual back to the God of salvation, who would not merely forgive his backsliding, but would change the hard and stony heart into a heart of flesh. But even for an individualist like Ezekiel salvation was no self-centered blessing. The individual saints he gathered around him were to be the nucleus of a new spiritual community that should succeed to all the hopes and promises of the Israel of old. And, as later prophets emphasized, this newer Israel must commend its faith to the world even more by social right-doing than by personal holiness and purity.

In the spiral movement of history we appear to have reverted to another era of social interest and aspiration. And the prophet must be in living touch with the needs of the age. He will still, indeed, seek to win the individual soul to personal faith and holiness. But he must likewise help to give clarity and purpose to the vague strivings of the people after a higher national life. Here the prophets have much to teach us. They were not political economists who set themselves up as "judges and dividers" among men. But they held forth great ideals of national righteousness which they had seen with their own eyes in the presence of the Eternal, and for which they demanded effective expression in life. As models for the preacher who aims at awakening the public conscience of today, one may specially commend Amos, chaps. 3, 5, and 6, and that most heart-searching chap. 5 of Isaiah. In none of these passages have we ignorant or unwarranted interference with legitimate rights, but vital principles brought directly

to bear on moral and social life. The prophets' criticism of existing conditions turns mainly on unjust or unworthy ways of acquiring and spending wealth. Of course flagrant dishonesty comes in for unsparing condemnation. Amos hurls out the wrath of God on such as make the ephah small and the shekel great, and deal unjustly with balances of deceit, on such too as grind the faces of the poor, exploiting their poverty to enrich themselves. Isaiah has a penetrating exposure of the social crime of monopoly. Those men who join field to field, and house to house, till there is no more room in the land for any but themselves, are guilty of two sins: depopulation, and manipulation of prices for the crushing of the poor, resulting also in the moral and spiritual rot of the monopolist himself. But the prophets deal as seriously with the use of wealth. In their eyes wealth is the gift of God, and is therefore to be employed for high and worthy purposes. The misapplication of wealth to secure favors in the law-courts, or positions of honor to which the aspirants have no just claim—in other words, graft—is sin against the Lord God of hosts. And the spending of fortunes on the pure gratification of selfish lusts and pleasures is equally sinful in the eyes of God. The prophets lift up their voices in condemnation, not merely of intemperance and impurity, but also of foolish idleness. Thus Amos turns with splendid irony on those who sat long hours at the table, on their richly embroidered cushions, toying with their toothsome morsels, the stalled calves and lambs of the flock, and sipping their drained and perfumed wines, twanging the while on their viols, and singing silly songs to the music, fancying themselves very Davids in prowess and skill, while they had no thought for the affliction of Joseph.

But the words of the prophets are by no means all of condemnation. The older conception of prophecy as essentially foretelling of the future has passed away before a juster view of its religious significance. Yet this was one element of the prophets' task. While they urged the present duty, they held out before their people visions of future glory or ruin, to encourage them on the ways of righteousness, or deter them from their wild onrush toward evil. It is remarkable how clearly and truly they dis-

cerned the broad lines of the future destiny of their people. But more significant, in the larger issue, were their visions of the final triumph of justice, truth, and peace. They no doubt foreshortened the time, expecting to see the dawn of the kingdom of God in their own age. But though the days have lengthened, the prophetic anticipations of a new earth from which war shall have vanished, and men shall be drawn together as brothers in the knowledge of God, and respect and affection for one another, when they shall work, too, no longer as machines, but as human beings, each one dwelling under his own vine and fig-tree, are abiding inspirations to all who labor for the Kingdom. In our preaching also there should be found a place for this vision of better days to come. Our hearers live too much in the valleys. In their engrossment with worldly duties and troubles they can often hardly see beyond them. Even our civic and social reformers can at times perceive nothing but the smoke of the battle. It should be our duty to lift them to the heights, from which they can look out, and see with prophets and reformers of other ages the brightening dawn of the glories to come, that they may return to their offices and workshops, their seats of judgment and places of administration, to work with surer, clearer purpose, and with unremitting enthusiasm, for purity, justice, and honor among men.



# The American Institute of Sacred Literature

## A PROFESSIONAL READING COURSE ON THE APOSTOLIC AGE

*One of the most remarkable and most uplifting movements of history was the rapid geographical extension of Christianity, and its accession to religious and moral power. There were fundamental conditions in the Mediterranean world that prepared the way for this victory of the gospel. The factors were partly religious, partly moral, partly intellectual, and partly political. There was a great need of mankind to be met, and there was the religion of Jesus and of Paul to meet it. There were the Jews everywhere dispersed throughout the Empire who had brought to many Gentiles the higher Jewish faith and the higher Jewish morals, and this previous mission contributed much to the success of Christianity. Also, the oriental religions were supplying the shortcomings of the Graeco-Roman religion, and the prevailing syncretism made a way for Christianity to enter, and a soil in which it might grow. The history of the progress of Christianity in the first century is fascinating and instructive.*

*This study of the spread of Christianity in the Apostolic age is conducted by PROFESSOR GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT. Questions concerning it may be addressed to the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.*

---

### II. THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE

Harnack's *Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries* is not assigned for the present course on the Apostolic age with the thought that it is altogether satisfactory. The reader whose interest centers especially on the earliest age of the church has here a vast amount of material which is of no immediate value. He must select and rearrange in order to avail himself of the information to be had from this work which is concerned with the third century no less than with the first. But though not ideal, it seems to the present writer the best to be had. The circumstance that it surveys three centuries and not merely the Apostolic age has this advantage at least, that by its portrayal of the *entire* first missionary epoch of the church, it helps the reader to form a better judgment of the significance of the age of the apostles which was the creative *beginning* of this epoch.

Institutions and movements of the primitive church have some light thrown back upon them from their interpretation in the two subsequent centuries.

For the subject in hand this month—the spread of Christianity in the Apostolic age—the parts of Harnack's work which are to be more carefully considered are Books I and III with a single paragraph from Book IV.

On the broad and interesting question of the diffusion of Judaism at the beginning of the Christian era, Harnack gives a compact and lucid summary of the results reached by many scholars. He inclines to the conservative estimate of the population of the Roman Empire in the time of Augustus, that it was only about fifty-four millions. While admitting that almost 7 per cent of this total were Jews, he would include in this the numerous proselytes of all grades and "in particular kindred Semites of the lower class." Among these Jews of the Diaspora there was a vigorous missionary impulse, and propaganda was carried on in the consciousness that the world needed the revelation of the one God and His holy law which Israel had to give. The wide success of this propaganda was due not only to the essential worth of the Jewish message, but also in part to the fact that the Jews of the Diaspora possessed certain social and political privileges. It should, however, be remembered that these privileges of which our author speaks were somewhat neutralized by the widespread and implacable dislike which the masses felt for the Jews. As far as we can judge of the "God-fearing" Gentiles from the references to them in the New Testament, we should say that they were led over to Judaism by its power to satisfy their moral and religious nature rather than by any lower, more material considerations.

In his statement regarding other external conditions of the spread of Christianity, Harnack seems to give much greater influence to facts which were Roman in character, as the fact of world-empire, the fact of international communication, Roman jurisprudence, and the policy of religious toleration which Rome practiced, than he gives to Hellenism. The hellenization of the world, particularly in the matter of language, is accorded a prominent place among the external conditions, but the question may be raised whether the process of hellenization did not have even greater importance than our author seems to allow. Thus, e.g., it was not so much the scattering of the Jews throughout all the Empire that conditioned the spread of Christianity as it was the *liberalizing* of these Jews. It was the liberalized Hellenists who became the most efficient missionaries in the Apostolic age.

Of the internal conditions which determined the spread of Christianity the two supremely important were polytheism and syncretism. The vital embodiment of the former was in the cult of the emperors. Polytheism, except in this political aspect of it, had been undermined by the advance of knowledge (cf. the retrogression of native religions in India and China today). Syncretism, however, by which is meant the mingling of all the various elements of living faith, chiefly the attainment of Greek philosophy, was a "secret ally" of Christian preaching. The paradoxical remark is made that Christianity had nothing to do with this syncretism save to cleanse, to simplify, and to *complicate* it.

The attitude of Jesus toward the universal mission is briefly considered, but is not reckoned among the *conditions* of the spread of the new religion. If, however, the preaching of Jesus was really universalistic in character, implicitly rather than formally, this fact might certainly be counted as a prime condition of the world-mission. It seems to the present writer that Harnack goes somewhat too far in his affirmation of the national horizon of Jesus. Thus he says that the word "just" in Mark 7:27 is not to be "pressed." But without any pressing whatever does it not point to a mission of the gospel among the Gentiles? We may grant that both evangelists who relate the incident regarded it as an exceptional case, i.e., an exception in the *practice* of Jesus. Regarding his own practice there can indeed be no doubt, but we cannot at once assume that he regarded his own practice in this particular as furnishing a rule from which his disciples were never to depart. We must of course agree with Harnack that the formal command of Matt. 28:19 was never given by Jesus.

We come now to the transition of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles. Though our author says it is not quite clear how the gentile mission arose, he manifestly sees its origin in the cleavage between the Hebrews and the Hellenists in the Jerusalem church. This cleavage brought about the appointment of the Seven, and this fact in turn gave Stephen his opportunity. From his activity arose the persecution and the consequent dispersion of many believers, some of whom at length preached the gospel to the Gentiles in Antioch. That three of the five prophets and teachers who are mentioned in Acts 13:1, i.e., all except Barnabas and Saul, were the identical persons who instituted the gentile mission in Antioch is Harnack's conjecture. In this church at Antioch, founded by Hellenists and consisting of Hellenists and Gentiles, there seems to have been no controversy over the relation of Gentiles to the law until conservatives came down from Jerusalem. That was

the hour when the reaction of Jews and Jewish-Christians against the universalism of the gospel began—a reaction that continued with unabated force until the overthrow of the Jewish people.

On the attitude of Jewish-Christians and of Paul toward gentile Christianity the student will find Harnack's present view not in the work now under consideration but in his *Acts of the Apostles*, which was considered last month.

We pass now to the first two chapters of Book III on the "Missionaries and Their Methods," and shall later return to the last chapter of Book I on the "Results of the First Missions."

The preliminary question as to the origin of the term "apostle" is important. It is held that Matthew, Mark, and John are ignorant of the title as a designation of the Twelve. Matt. 10:2 is regarded as a revision of the original, and Mark 6:30 as referring to the temporary mission on which the Twelve had been sent in the lifetime of Jesus. The question may be raised here in passing whether this single occurrence of the term in Mark, like the use of "Christ" in 1:1, may not be regarded as an unconscious antedating of the historical usage of the word.

The introduction of the term "apostle" is attributed to Paul, but his usage is fluctuating. Of the two senses in which he uses the word—a wider and a narrower—it would seem as though the latter were the original inasmuch as he held the Twelve to have been the nucleus of the apostolate. The word "apostle" is very seldom limited by Paul to the Twelve, possibly only twice (I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:17).

Luke's references to the inner circle of the friends of Jesus combine the usage of the earliest tradition and that of Paul. In the gospel he calls them the "Twelve" or the "Eleven" and in Acts usually the "apostles." It is to be noticed that his conception of what was requisite to constitute one an apostle does not agree with Paul's. According to the standard of Acts 1:21, Paul was not an apostle.

How Paul came to use the word "apostle" at all is a point on which our author does not hold a decided opinion. It is thought probable that he was led to it by an existing Jewish use of the term. After the destruction of Jerusalem the agents of the patriarchate in the Diaspora were called "apostles," and it is plausibly held that the Jews would not have adopted, at that time, a term in common use among their enemies. The query is raised whether Paul may not have been a Jewish "apostle" in his pre-Christian days. He was certainly a "messenger" to the Diaspora from the high priest in Jerusalem.

The early missionaries or preachers of Christianity were called apostles, prophets, and teachers. Of these terms two at least were taken directly from Judaism. Prophecy was in full bloom among the Jews in the time of Jesus and His apostles, and the high position of rabbis explains the prestige of Christian teachers. But the *grouping* of these three classes had a Christian origin. As evidence that the primitive church did group them together, the author points to Acts 13:1; I Cor. 12:28, and also to the Didache. From the same sources, with the addition of Heb. 13:7 and kindred passages which give unique honor to the speaking of God's word, the author holds that apostles, prophets, and teachers were all occupied with the word of God, and that they were assigned by Him to the church *as a whole*. To this Catholic mission of apostles, prophets, and teachers is to be attributed in large measure the homogeneity of primitive Christendom. The Catholic Epistles of the New Testament are to be associated with this Catholic mission of apostles, prophets, and teachers. The literary phenomenon is to be explained by the previous institution.

In speaking of methods of the early mission, Harnack does not mean that this mission was carried on by a systematic and rigid employment of certain external means. "A living faith requires no special methods for its propagation." The simple course of the mission was characterized by preaching and baptism. Though the New Testament contains no missionary treatise and no account of the inner rise and growth of any Christian personality, we may form an idea of Paul's preaching to the Gentiles from the first three chapters of Romans and the seventeenth chapter of Acts. To these may be added the first letter to the Thessalonians. We gather from such passages that Paul sought first to awaken a feeling of sinfulness, that he then developed the conception of the cross as the wisdom and power of God, and that he usually made some use of the coming judgment.

Of baptism in the earliest Christian community our author treats in few words. Indeed his treatment is quite fragmentary and incidental. He thinks that the rite was most welcome to pagans with their craving for mysteries, and that it was the subject of much speculation from the very first. Paul's remarks on baptism in I Cor. 1:13-17 are not thought to show any depreciation of the rite. He is thought to have considered it "simply indispensable." But this judgment of the author is not supported by any arguments, and need not be taken too seriously.

Of more significance for the spread of Christianity in the Apostolic age is that section of Book IV which deals with women. As the propa-

ganda of Judaism had been very successful among women, so also was the earliest propaganda of the gospel. The example of Jesus was here significant, though the author does not attempt to describe its influence on Paul. The apostle's declaration of the perfect equality of the sexes before God made woman independent in the church. The numerous New Testament data which illustrate woman's activity in the primitive church are gathered together with occasional suggestive annotation, as when the conversion of Apollos is ascribed to Prisca rather than to her husband. The prominence of women as teachers and as deaconesses continued for more than a century.

The result of missions in the Apostolic age is summed up, geographically, in the statement that about 50 A.D. Christianity was an ellipse whose foci were Jerusalem and Antioch, and that a half-century later these foci were Ephesus and Rome.

When Paul wrote to the Romans that he had preached the gospel from Jerusalem and round about even unto Illyricum, he meant that he had carried it throughout the Greek world. Yet he never alludes to Egypt, which was an important part of that world. Harnack raises the question whether Paul thought of Egypt as an utterly hopeless field or knew that others were laboring there and so did not go thither himself. Perhaps we are not to adopt either of these explanations. The hopelessness of Egypt as a field for the gospel is surely not to be inferred from Rev. 11:8, and we may not infer that Paul refused to go thither because he knew that other missionaries were already there. He went to Ephesus though he knew that Prisca and Aquila were laboring in that city. As Paul's letters are addressed to particular churches and deal with their specific needs, it is not strange that he makes no allusion to Egypt, and as for Luke it is quite obvious that he makes no attempt to be exhaustive in his account of the passing of the Gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles. Whether Paul knew of work in Egypt or not, it is highly probable that the gospel was preached there from an early day.

Paul's plan to cross the Roman world and visit Spain is thought by Harnack to have been realized. But the greatness of his service did not lie in the geographical extent of his tours: it lay rather in his power to train up fellow-laborers, and to organize his churches. While it is true that he did not understand Hellenism profoundly, he understood it well enough to give the gospel permanent roots in Hellenic soil. The most abiding result of Paul's missionary activity is, of course, his letters. Through them he became the teacher of Christendom.

It is regarded as doubtful whether the christianizing of Asia Minor was shared in by Peter, but certain that a prominent Jerusalemite—John the presbyter—had a part in it both by personal oversight and by his writings (Harnack assigns to him all the Johannine writings in the New Testament), certain also that Philip and his daughters shared in it.

In his second volume, Harnack gives a list of places in which we are certain that there were Christians as early as the first century. Thirty-nine cities and towns are mentioned and nine regions mainly Roman provinces, in which there were a number of Christian communities.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the nature and extent of our New Testament writings, it is not strange that we are unable to show a longer list of places in which Christianity had been established by the close of the first century. When we consider that twenty-three or twenty-four of these cities and towns in Harnack's list are mentioned only in connection with Paul's work as a missionary, when further we bear in mind the significant glimpses we have of such efficient laborers as those who founded the first gentile church in Antioch, and when we remember that the missionary impulse in the primitive church seems to have been both general and persistent, we cannot doubt that this list showing the geographical spread of Christianity in the Apostolic age gives us only a fragmentary idea of the subject.

At the same time Christian people in general are probably inclined to overestimate the impression made by the Gospel during the first age. Its numerical victory was not comparable with that which Mohammedanism made in the same length of time. The language of Paul in such passages as Rom. 1:8; Thess. 1:8; and Col. 1:6 is an extreme, though natural, exaggeration. It is likely that in the decade which witnessed the martyrdom of Peter and Paul the Christian community in cities like Rome and Antioch was rather as an invisible lever than a conspicuous and recognized feature of the public life. Modern missions in civilized lands, as in Japan and China, can probably show, as indeed they ought, greater results than were achieved in the Apostolic age.

<sup>1</sup>We have not included in this count Arabia, Illyria, or Dalmatia, all of which stand in Harnack's list, though Illyria is bracketed. There is no evidence whatever that Paul labored in Arabia, and no proof whatever that there were believers in Dalmatia.

## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

### SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS OF CLUBS USING THE OUTLINE COURSES

*Every month from October to June there will be presented in this department of the BIBLICAL WORLD suggestions to leaders of Bible Classes desiring to use as a basis for class work either the outline Bible-study course on "THE LIFE OF CHRIST" prepared by Ernest D. Burton, or that on "THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST" by William R. Harper. Suggestions are prepared by Georgia Louise Chamberlin, Secretary of the Reading and Library Department of the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, who will be glad to consider any questions which club leaders may choose to address to the INSTITUTE.*

#### THE LIFE OF CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

The life of Jesus was many-sided. It is impossible for a class to get a clear picture of Jesus in all the aspects of his life from the brief study which is comprehended in this course. It is necessary, therefore, to choose a line of emphasis which will impress the student with some particular phase of the character and work of Jesus. The spiritual insight of Jesus and his moral courage in proclaiming his message is perhaps most essential for inspiration in Christian living, and the suggestions for leaders of classes will tend in this direction.

In order to understand these phases of Jesus' character, it is necessary to bring his teaching into contrast with the religious ideals of his times, as they were expressed in the words of his antagonists, and in the religious institutions of the Jewish people. To the extent to which this knowledge must be gained from sources outside the Bible the leader should be responsible for the work. It may be that members of the class will have access to libraries and can make some independent investigation, but in general the policy of holding the class to the study of the Bible itself will give its members ability to see facts hitherto overlooked, to weigh them, and to draw impressions for themselves from a source which is always open to them.

<sup>1</sup> The textbook for this course is *The Life of Christ*, by Ernest D. Burton; 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.



The value of drill-work in this course should not be miscalculated. Students are asked to memorize the outline at least in its larger divisions. This seemingly mechanical work provides a skeleton only, and is valueless without the sympathetic interpretation of the words and thought of Jesus back of this outline. The memoriter work should therefore follow the fuller treatment of the period covered and be insisted upon only for those who feel its value to themselves.

### *Program I*

*Leader:* (1) The significance of the temple and its ministry to the Jewish people. (2) The common fate of religious leaders among the Jews in the centuries before Christ. (3) The spiritual vision of Jesus contrasted with the literalism of his day.

*Members of the class:* (1) Jesus in the Temple at thirty years of age and at twelve years of age—a comparison. (2) The conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus. Let this conversation be arranged as a dialogue, with an explanatory discussion, thus: “Now there was a man of the Pharisees named, etc.” *Nicodemus:* “Rabbi, we know, etc.” *Jesus:* “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, etc.” *Nicodemus:* “How can a man, etc.” (3) Samaria in Jewish history. (4) The conversation with the Samaritan woman. Treat this in the same manner as No. 2, and in addition divide the dialogue into scenes: Scene I, vss. 6–7 and following. Scene II, vs. 28 and following. (5) Concert recitation of chapters and section-titles thus far covered.

*Subject for discussion:* To what extent does the action of Jesus in the Temple indicate what his attitude would be toward uses to which places of worship should be put in our own times?

### *Program II*

*Leader:* The evidence of definite plans in the mind of Jesus for organizing his work as indicated in (a) choosing disciples; (b) adopting a policy in work; (c) fixing an attitude toward the religious customs of his day—the synagogue, feasts, fasts, etc.

*Members of the class:* (1) An imaginary description of “The day of Miracles” in Capernaum. (2) A comparison of Jesus’ reception in Capernaum and Nazareth, accounting for the difference. (3) Jesus at an ancient “Sanitarium.” Tell the story and discuss its outcome as affecting the future of Jesus. (4) The motives of Jesus in healing men, as they have been stated or implied in the narratives of healing already studied. (5) Jesus’ statements about himself contained in the work of

this month. (6) Conflict between Jesus and the Jews—how it began and the steps by which it went forward. (7) A map review.

*Subject for discussion:* General principles upon which Jesus settled matters relating to the observance of the Sabbath.

#### REFERENCE READING

Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. I, pp. 364-460; Edersheim, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life*, chaps. xiii, xiv, xv; McCoun, *The Holy Land in Geography and History*; Holtzmann, *The Life of Jesus*, pp. 155-231; Sanday, *Outlines of the Life of Christ*, pp. 101-117; Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 158-206; Rhees, *The Life of Jesus of Nazareth*, pp. 101-124; Farrar, *Life of Christ*, pp. 183-249; Dawson, *Life of Christ*, pp. 94-169; Burton and Mathews, *Life of Christ*, Secs. 27-46; Burgess, *Life of Christ*, Secs. 27-46.

Consult also Hastings, four-volume and one-volume editions of the *Bible Dictionary*, and Hastings, *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

#### THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

The period of turmoil which accompanied the transformation of the Hebrew people from an aggregate of tribes to a nation unified in form, if not in spirit, could hardly be expected to contain crystallized expressions of new religious thought and feeling. On the other hand, the greatest men of genius in the world's history have seemed to be the product of revolutions, and religious and political upheavals. We are not surprised, therefore, to find a Samuel coming to the front in Israelitish history after the conquest, with a contribution not only to political advancement, but as a forerunner of the greatest idealist in early Israel—David, the poet, warrior, and king.

There is so little evidence as to the extent of David's relationship to the Psalter, that only a few psalms are selected as evidence of religious idealism in this period. We look rather at the man Samuel and the man David as presenting in themselves qualities which were essential to the well-being of that messianic kingdom, which was to occupy the thought of the people for many generations. While we must estimate these men by the standards of their own times, having done that as best we may, we should still further modify our conclusions by the fact that David remained through all the years of the nation's life the ideal type of man and king, not only in the hearts of the people, but in their calm judgment as well. To compel the class to feel the strength of

<sup>1</sup> The textbook for this course is *The Foreshadowings of the Christ*, by William Rainey Harper, 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address The AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

these two men and their relationship to the developing ideals of the people is an important task. Each of these men was, to a certain extent, himself a foreshadowing of the Messiah.

### *Program I*

*Leader:* (1) A rapid sketch of the conquest period. (2) The political, social, and religious conditions in Israel during this period. (3) The rise of prophecy and the schools of the prophets. (4) The problems faced by Samuel.

*Members of the class:* (1) Samuel, the child, the priest, the statesman, the prophet. (2) Stories of Saul illustrating different phases of his character. (3) Stories of David illustrating his character. (4) Selected readings from Browning's "Saul." (5) Reading of Ps. 8 as representing the highest ideal of man in this period.

*Subject for discussion:* The characteristics of the Hebrew idea of God in this period.

### *Program II*

*Leader:* (1) Jerusalem in history and story previous to David. (2) The limitations of military government as distinguished from civic and religious. (3) The world surrounding Palestine at the time of David.

*Members of the class:* (1) David's ideal of the capital city. (2) The story of the bringing up of the ark. (I Sam., chap. 6.) (3) Reading of Ps. 24. (4) The organization of a cabinet. (5) David's relation to the order of the prophets. (The story of Nathan.)

*Subject for discussion:* Facts and speculation as to the causes for the division of the kingdom of Solomon.

### REFERENCE READING

Batten, *The Hebrew Prophet*, chaps. 3, 4; Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, chap. 5; Goodspeed, *Israel's Messianic Hope*, chap. 3; Cornill, *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 27, 28; Orelli, *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 148-188; George Adam Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, Vol. I, pp. 11-24; Harper, *The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament*, chap. 4; Chamberlin, *The Hebrew Prophets*, pp. 1-26; Moore, "Judges," introduction (*International Critical Commentary*); Kirkpatrick, "Samuel," introduction (*Cambridge Bible*), "Samuel," *Century Bible*; special articles in the dictionaries on "Samuel," "Saul," "David," "Prophets," "Schools of Prophets," "Psalms," "Ark," "The Book of Judges," etc.

## Current Opinion

### THEOLOGICAL UNION IN MONTREAL

An interesting and important consolidation of the theological colleges at Montreal has reached its first stage. There have hitherto been four colleges, Congregational, Diocesan (Episcopal), Presbyterian, and Wesleyan, quite independent of one another, but with a slight affiliation with McGill University. Each of the colleges has offered the full course leading to the B.D. degree, conferred by the college not by the university. The affiliation with the university has meant little more than the opportunity for the theological students to take the Arts work in the university. Each of the colleges was small in the number of students and of instructors, and each of the instructors necessarily taught subjects outside his own specialty.

A most happy plan of co-operation has now been effected. The plan involves a Board of Governors who shall have general direction of the united undertaking, a Senate, consisting of ten governors and the professors, to have in charge all academic matters, and a Faculty which shall include all the professors of the four colleges. The four principals act in turn as dean for one year. The curriculum has been arranged with reference to the special abilities of each instructor. Each professor will lecture in his own college building, and as the buildings are all about the university campus, there will be no inconvenience. Each college will of course be self-governing and will take care of its own denominational instruction. It is remarkable, however, how few courses have been withdrawn from the general curriculum for this reason.

The next step will be the raising of funds for a general building. And one naturally thinks that the ultimate step must be the formation of a Theological Faculty of McGill University with provision for denominational hostels. McGill holds a royal charter, which leaves it perfectly free for any such development, when, in the judgment of the governors, it is deemed advisable. It is perhaps fortunate that the university has not yet organized a theological faculty, as it has now the opportunity of forming one which will be entirely above any denominational influence. How soon this may come about it is of course impossible to say, but the happy working of the new plan, which all confidently expect, will go far toward making such a consummation possible.

## Book Reviews

### THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY

*The Christian Hope: A Study in the Doctrine of Immortality*,<sup>1</sup> by William Adams Brown, is the latest handbook issued in the "Studies in Theology" series. The book sustains Professor Brown's reputation for scholarly familiarity with the materials involved and for skill in employing his material. As a "study" in a practical and somewhat popular sense it will certainly prove a useful and suggestive book for many who have a keen interest in this vital problem. It is written in a spirit and style which will make it helpful for the intelligent lay reader—the best book, on the whole, of which we know for interpreting the problem in a modern way for the untechnical mind.

The plan of the book is admirable. In its general method of approach to the subject, viz., historical and inductive, many will discover its greatest service. A comprehensive historical survey of pre-Christian and Christian forms of belief in immortality is followed by a division in which Professor Brown offers a constructive discussion of the chief aspects of the problem involved. The doctrine is to be regarded as a growth. "Christianity has added to man's belief in the life after death two things: first, a new evidence of the fact; secondly, a new definition of its nature. The evidence for the fact is the personality of Jesus; the new definition of its nature is Christlikeness. Each of these is the direct contribution of Jesus to man's thought of the future" (p. 75).

Considerable attention is given to Jesus' relationship to the Christian belief, and there is a chapter on the resurrection of Jesus in its relation to the problem. Throughout, there is a fine ethical emphasis and an insistence upon the spiritual root of the essentially Christian doctrine. The artificiality of intellectualism and the superficial limitation of natural science in dealing with the spiritual fact are brought out in the course of the treatment.

We think the book admirably calculated to accomplish what is its evident aim, viz., to orientate the reader to the modern method of regarding the elements of the problem, and to create the essentially ethical estimate of its nature and value. It is not so much by way of criticism as by way of noting the limitations of the handbook that we venture to

<sup>1</sup>*The Christian Hope*. By William Adams Brown. New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. 215. 75 cents.

point out that some of the profounder aspects of the problem of method are left very obscure for the thoroughgoing thinker. We are uncertain of the presuppositions that underlie some of the conclusions. In spite of the fine ethical insight which pervades the treatment, we are left in uncertainty as to whether Professor Brown's appeal to Jesus and the Scriptures involves any of the traditional reliance upon supernaturalism, or whether we are to rely solely upon the spiritual pre-eminence of Jesus. The vexed "authority" problem is met only with indirection. There is a certain practical advantage in maintaining this obscurity today, for one who would be a "mediator" between two conflicting types of theological interpretation. In the unsettled state of theology today an irenic attitude has its great reward. And the multitude of readers and hearers are not concerned with the finer points of rational consistency. Still the philosophic reader who wants to think the whole matter through in scholarly fashion will wish that Professor Brown would declare himself in the matter of fundamental method, in order that we may evaluate the arguments in their intellectual satisfaction and consistency as well as in their satisfaction of the heart.

A useful classified bibliography is subjoined to the volume.

HERBERT ALDEN YOUTZ

AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### LIFE IN ANCIENT BABYLONIA<sup>1</sup>

The galleries and cases of our museums are being enriched every year by the "finds" of the near Orient. Those treasures are adding new increments to our fragmentary knowledge of the ancient civilizations of that Orient. Each year's "finds" set aside some fond theory or some elaborate explication of former problems. Mr. Handcock has endeavored to gather up the old and the new and to present a picture, as complete as possible, of the civilization of ancient Babylonia and Assyria. The work follows the usual trend of books on archaeology, though of course adapted to that of the Mesopotamian valley. The first four (of the fourteen) chapters discuss I, (a) land and people; (b) sketch of Babylonian and Assyrian history; II, excavations; III, decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions; and IV, cuneiform inscriptions. Then in succession we find: architecture; sculpture; metallurgy; painting; cylinder-seals; shell-engraving and ivory-work;

<sup>1</sup> *Mesopotamian Archaeology*. An Introduction to the Archaeology of Babylonia and Assyria. By Percy S. P. Handcock. With numerous illustrations, also maps. New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. xvi+423. Price \$3.50.

terra-cotta figures and reliefs; stoneware and pottery; dress, military accouterments, etc.; life, manners, customs, law, religion; a short bibliography; and a brief chronological summary.

The wealth of available material increased the difficulties of the author in reaching his goal. One of the good features of the work is the very large use made of the latest "finds" in the early Sumerian centers of Babylonia. The excavations at Tellô by the French expeditions, at Nippur by the University of Pennsylvania, and at Bismya by the University of Chicago, brought to light almost all we know of that ancient people of Babylonia whose very existence has been questioned by some scholars. Hancock has made valuable additions to nearly every chapter of his book from the remains of that mysterious race. Architecture, sculpture, metallurgy, terra-cotta figures and reliefs, and a few items on manners and customs, receive the largest contributions from that source.

But in any attempt to discriminate in favor of, or against, the so-called Sumerians, we are always confronted by a mixture of Semitic elements that both complicate the problem and stimulate an interest in its careful solution. Hancock has a discriminating method, and as a rule, has measured up his elements justly for both parties, the Sumerians and the Semites.

Some of the best features of the work are found in the abundance of its illustrations. There are one colored plate, and thirty-two full-page half-tones, 115 illustrations in the text, and two maps. Very many of these are new, and all illumine the narrative, thus practically doubling the real value of the narrative in which they stand.

The last chapter is entirely too brief, "life, manners, customs, law, religion" are all disposed of in forty-two pages. Doubtless the author himself discerned before he had completed this chapter and nearly exhausted his space that these themes were merely scratched on the surface. A full index puts the contents at a reader's easy disposal on any one of the hundreds of items handled in the text. The author is to be congratulated on the issuance of such a timely work, and he is deserving of the gratitude of all students of early Mesopotamian archaeology.

IRA MAURICE PRICE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## New Literature

The most important books listed in these columns will receive notice in the book-review pages.

### OLD TESTAMENT

#### BOOKS

MITCHELL, H. G., SMITH, J. M. POWIS, BEWER, JULIUS A. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and Jonah. New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. xxvi+515. \$3.00.

This volume is the last of the three volumes on the Minor Prophets which were to have been prepared by President Harper. Haggai and Zechariah are done by Mitchell, Malachi by Smith, and Jonah by Bewer. The standpoint of all three authors is that of historical criticism.

JOHNS, C. H. W. Ancient Assyria. [The Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature.] New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. 175. 40 cents.

This booklet is from the pen of a well-known scholar, who has often demonstrated his skill in reading Assyrian inscriptions. But the manual is too much concerned with chronological problems to be of much interest or value to the general student. It records the opinions of its author upon many of these difficult questions, but does not convey to the layman in Assyrian matters a very clear or comprehensive idea of the course of Assyrian history.

MACALISTER, R. A. S. A History of Civilization in Palestine. [The Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature.] New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. viii+139. 40 cents.

This is a sketch of the civilization of Palestine which reads very well. The scholar will find many of its propositions open to serious question, but it will meet the needs of the general public fairly well.

MCNEILE, A. H. Deuteronomy—Its Place in Revelation. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. viii+136.

This is really a popular introduction to the Book of Deuteronomy, in which the commonly accepted historical interpretation of the book as coming from the days of Josiah or Manasseh is expounded and defended against the claims made in behalf of Mosaic authorship. It is a well-written and thoroughly competent discussion.

EISELEN, F. C. The Christian View of the Old Testament. New York: Eaton & Mains. Pp. 267. \$1.00.

A very helpful presentation of the modern view of the Old Testament as the record of the developing religious experience of Israel.

SMYTHE, G. F. The God of Israel. [The Bedell Lectures for 1911, on the Evidences of Revealed Religion.] Gambier, Ohio: Bedell Lectureship Foundation, 1912. Pp. 114.

A very simple statement of the growth of the idea of God in Israel. But the writer fails to appreciate some very important facts essential to the correct reading of the record of Israel's religion.

#### ARTICLES

ALEXANDER, G. The English Bible and the Anglo-Saxon People, *The Methodist Review*, October, 1912. Pp. 720-47.

An excellent appreciation of the significance of the English Bible in the development of the Anglo-Saxon race.







PROFESSOR SHAILER MATHEWS, D.D.

# THE BIBLICAL WORLD

VOLUME XL

DECEMBER, 1912

NUMBER 6

## Editorial

### A CHANGE OF EDITORSHIP

The founder and first editor of the *Biblical World* was William Rainey Harper. When illness compelled him to lay aside the task of editorial supervision, it was taken up in his name by one of his colleagues on the editorial staff, and in July, 1906, the latter definitely assumed the office of editor-in-chief. Whatever may have been the expectation of those who elected him, his own thought then was and ever since has been that the task then received as a sacred trust should be carried forward with all possible vigor and with all necessary adaptation to changing conditions, until it might be surrendered to one fitted, by native qualities, previous experience, and the necessary measure of freedom from other tasks, to carry forward with greater vigor and larger success the work which President Harper inaugurated. That time has now clearly arrived, and it is with peculiar satisfaction that he whose name appears for the last time on this issue of the *Biblical World* as editor-in-chief surrenders to another the chief editorial responsibility. With the issue of January, 1913, Professor Shailer Mathews becomes the editor of the *Biblical World*, and the journal enters upon a new period of its history.

Professor Mathews was graduated from Colby University in 1884 and from the Newton Theological Institution in 1887. He came to the University of Chicago in 1894 as Associate Professor of New Testament History and Interpretation. He was made Junior Dean of the Divinity School in 1899, and on the death of

Dean Eri B. Hulbert in 1907 succeeded to his office. He was transferred from the New Testament Department to that of Systematic Theology in 1904, becoming Professor of Historical Theology. On the establishment of the *World To-Day* in 1903 he became its editor and rapidly raised the magazine to a place of large and healthful influence in the life and thought of the country. On its removal to New York in 1911, Mr. Mathews, though invited to continue as editor, preferred his work in the University, and accordingly resigned his editorship.

Mr. Mathews' first book, *Mediaeval Documents*, was published while he was at Colby University. Since coming to the University of Chicago, he has published among others the following books: *The Social Teaching of Jesus*; *A History of New Testament Times in Palestine*; *The French Revolution*; *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament*; *The Church and the Changing Order*; *The Social Gospel*; *The Gospel and the Modern Man*.

This partial list of Mr. Mathews' writings is sufficient evidence alike of his sound and broad scholarship, and of the exceptional breadth of his social interests. With a large knowledge of human history, with an especially intimate acquaintance with the history of the church and of Christian thought, with a sympathetic contact with the great modern movements for the betterment of the world and the advancement of Christianity, with a successful experience in the editing of a monthly magazine of wide circulation, with a ready and trenchant pen and a wide acquaintance with present-day writers, Mr. Mathews comes to the editorship of the *Biblical World* well fitted to make it as notable a force in dealing with the problems of the present hour as, in the days of President Harper's greatest vigor and influence, it was in relation to the questions then uppermost in Christian thought.

In the early years of Dr. Harper's editorship the questions of biblical criticism, especially of the Old Testament, filled a large place in the thoughts of Christian thinkers in America and England, and the pages of the *Old Testament Student* reflect that fact. The problems of biblical criticism are not all solved, but not even those of the New Testament have today the acuteness which those of the Old Testament had between 1880 and 1890. The work done by

the Old Testament scholars of a generation ago was well done, and of far-reaching consequences. Men said, indeed, "This may do for the Old Testament—the church will never accept it for the New Testament." But they were mistaken. The problem was one, the solution was one, and in due time this fact was recognized. The right of investigation into all matters pertaining to the Bible, and the duty of accepting the results of such investigation having been established, Christian men have moved eagerly on into the region to which the door has thus been opened. There is no occasion to fight over again the battles of past generations; new situations have created new tasks of surpassing interest and far-reaching importance. The center of interest has passed from the Old Testament to the New, and from the New Testament to the comparison and relation of religions, to constructive Christian theology, to religious education, and to the expression of religion in various social and ethical activities. This tendency may, indeed, if carried too far, lead to neglect of biblical study, but in itself it is an inevitable and not an undesirable result of the work done in the biblical field.

If it would serve the church of today the *Biblical World* must not hark back to former tasks already accomplished, but while continuing to promote the intelligent and thorough study of the Bible, must address itself with eagerness to the problems of the present and the future. The progress already made in this direction has not been unconscious or unintentional, but, though almost inevitable, also of deliberate purpose. With the change of editorship a further step will doubtless be taken in the same direction. Inheriting as a tradition from the days of the founder of the magazine a policy and habit of alertness to the problems of the hour, and of courage in dealing with them, Mr. Mathews will bring to his new task that breadth of vision and sympathy which were expressed in the name of the magazine of which he was formerly editor, the *World To-Day*. Though the change of editorship may not be marked by any change in the name of the magazine, the *Biblical World* will, in effect, become, even more than heretofore, the Religious World To-Day.

## ADVANTAGES ACCRUING FROM THE FUNCTIONAL VIEW OF RELIGION

---

FREDERICK G. HENKE, PH.D.  
University of Nanking, Nanking, China

---

The functional view of religion represents an attempt to relate religion in all its varied manifestations to the total life-process. It is a direct outgrowth of the point of view employed in biology and functional psychology.<sup>1</sup> Religion is not a something that has been conferred upon mankind, but is itself a type of activity whereby man seeks to adjust himself to his social environment and his social environment to himself. Its *raison d'être* is in the fact that human groups have found and still find it necessary to promote their highest social values. Religion thus becomes an intensely practical affair. It has emerged out of the life-process in the attempt to make life fuller and richer, and finds its place in the life-process because it continues to minister to man's needs.

The functional view of religion is thoroughly evolutionary. According to it, religious practices and ideas reflect the customs and thought of the groups to which they belong. This implies that changes in the social consciousness of any group tend to register themselves in its religion. The Todas, a people who subsist largely on the produce of the dairy, deify the buffalo. The god of the warlike Israelitish tribes is a great warrior. In a monarchy the great god is a king or emperor, while in a democracy there is a growing tendency to consider the deity as the embodiment of the highest social ideas that obtain among the people. According to the functional point of view, ritual and myth, liturgy and dogma, in fact all manifestations of religion must be evaluated by the actual contribution they make toward the ongoing of human progress. If at any time they become predominantly retrospective and retrogressive, their usefulness is *ipso facto* terminated, for the tide of normal human progress has left them in its wake.

<sup>1</sup> See Edward Scribner Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, chap. ii; also "The Psychological Basis of Religion," *Monist*, XX, 242-62.

It has been frequently urged that such interpretation involves the surrender of that authority in religion which is indispensable to the upkeep of its vitality and that thereby religion becomes little more than a reed wafted by every wind of public opinion. In contrast to this, the thesis here advocated is that specific advantages accrue from the functional view of religion, whereby religion is given the place in human activities that really belongs to it and whereby its usefulness is materially enhanced.

1. The functional view frees religion from the trammels of legalism and external authority and opens the way for a religion of the spirit. It does this by maintaining that the real function of religion consists in ministering to the ongoing of the highest social process and by insisting that everything that fails to meet this criterion should be expunged. Externalism and legalism are restrictions which present-day denominational religion finds it very hard to cast off. A more or less individual interpretation—at least in the first place—has been codified and made the criterion whereby the denomination judges whether a man is a true Christian or not. Thus with certain denominations baptism is held to be indispensable to salvation; with others some particular type of emotional experience is the *sine qua non* of entrance into the kingdom, while baptism is relegated into the background. The former forget that the religious attitude finds expression in concrete everyday acts quite independent of baptism, and the latter that the type of emotional experience demanded is perhaps a psychological impossibility in the instance of many individuals.

Logically, we have here instances in which an accident is made of first importance at the expense of the genus. If the Christian religion is to be open to humanity at large, if it is to be more than the idiosyncrasy of a few, it must be liberated from legalism and external authority and made the actual expression of life that has freely and willingly adapted itself to the highest social values.

At this point the objection may possibly be raised that law is as indispensable in matters of religion as in any other aspect of human experience. To this the functional student responds with a hearty, "Yes." But the law here as elsewhere in human experience must be vital and real. It must take the form of a principle

which manifests itself in higher and higher forms in the growing stages of culture. Human experience is not static. The ideals of the savage—whether in commerce, religion, or what not—are not those of the cultured European. In culture, the civilized man has outlived and overcome much that is primitive. There is a law of love. Men have always loved. But the connotation of love has changed greatly. Customary authorized love among the savages may for a higher stage of culture be licentiousness.

The religion of the ancients—Hebrews or others—is inadequate for modern conditions, and the dogmatism of scholasticism is no less so. Their inadequacy is to be found in the fact that they represent an adjustment to different social conditions. The thus-saith-the-Lord, or the Pope, or the Bible, may sound imposing today, but it soon loses its religious value when it results merely in bringing the individual into outward conformity with certain precepts. To coerce a man into performing certain so-called religious acts may result in a religious attitude; more frequently, however, it fails. Here, for instance, we find a partial explanation of the fact that many young men from Christian homes have a positive dislike for conventional religion. They have been made to think that religion is identical with some specific type of emotional experience or some particular religious act. For them this means simply that religion is legalistic and external. If that is religion the youth prefers not to be religious.

The functional view of religion recognizes the fact that religion is the result of the progressive effort of humanity to meet its elemental needs. It insists that religion should be as near life, as spontaneous an expression of life, today as it was in olden times. To coerce or overpersuade an individual into becoming religious is simply to invite superficiality. The functional view commends and inculcates religious principles that have been or are being functionally established, but refuses to subscribe to any absolutely determined and fixed type of religious experience or to isolate sacred from secular acts. One of the most convincing pieces of evidence for the correctness of this standpoint is the essential difference in the point of emphasis in the various branches of the Christian church. Within any single church the lines may



be drawn close and tight, but taking all as a whole, religion is an exceedingly broad and penetrating phenomenon.

The functional view places religion on the footing on which it really belongs and in so far as this view frees religion from legalism, formalism, and externalism it represents a substantial advance.

2. This view of religion is in essential harmony with the view entertained by Jesus. He stood for a complete socialization of the idea of God, and thus brought himself into direct conflict with the *lex talionis* as it was given in Leviticus and Exodus.<sup>2</sup> The crude conceptions of the ancients should be a thing of the past. The world must move on to greater and better things, especially in matters of religion. "Ye have heard," he announced, "that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."<sup>3</sup> The conspicuous thing is that he did not say, "Jehovah said," but simply asserted, "Ye have heard that it was said." Is it not likely that he considered the law of retribution but the statement of ancient custom, and saw room for a higher conception? He represented his Father as being kind toward the unthankful and evil,<sup>4</sup> and asked his followers to emulate that example. For religion this signified that the *lex talionis* had been superseded by the law of love. A principle adjustable to advancing stages of culture had thereby taken the place of an unpliable rule. This is certainly functional, and entirely in accord with the modern point of view. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the fact that it meant better religion, and that it is essentially an evolutionary attitude.

Moreover, Jesus viewed himself as fulfilling the law and the prophets.<sup>5</sup> We naturally ask, Did he believe himself to be absolutely fulfilling all, or did he think of himself as furthering a great movement which was eventually to spread over the whole earth and accomplish great things for righteousness? But one answer seems reasonable. Jesus conceived of himself as making a contribution to a great movement which had its beginning in the law and the prophets and was to be in no wise completed at the time of his departure. "He that believeth on me," he said, "the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Lev. 24:19, 20; Exod. 21:24.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 5:38.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 6:35.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 5:17.

<sup>6</sup> John 14:12.

Jesus was an optimist with a vision. He never deceived himself into believing that past religious customs had final authority in matters of religion. Past customs were to be followed in so far as they contributed to the ongoing of the kingdom of righteousness; all others were fearlessly discarded even though they appeared most sacred and had been inculcated with a *thus-saith-the-Lord*.

3. This brings us face to face with the problem of the best type of religion. Is the one to be preferred which can stand only when it is bolstered up by means of a definite historical setting, or is it the one that comes with authority because by its very nature it appeals to life and ministers to its needs?

There is a period in the evolution of society when the strange and the marvelous make a profound impression upon men and are regarded with awe. In that period religion has within its borders a mass of awe-inspiring material. Both cult and myth are pregnant with mystery and magic. Religion finds its authority in wonder-working and in being able to point back to a miraculous past—a past replete with magic and wonder. In this stage a *thus-saith-the-Lord*, a burning bush, a demon exorcised, a dead man raised to life, are facts of supreme religious importance, while the everyday facts, the ordinary events, the normal tide of progress, are thought to be secular rather than religious. God is believed to be transcendent rather than immanent. Under such circumstances religion, to be religion at all, must bear evidence that a transcendent God has actually intervened in the affairs of men and established it. Without a definite historical setting of this type it lacks appealing force, and if this setting is reduced to modern terminology and thereby shown to conform to well-established laws, religion is forthwith believed to lose its authority.

If human society were not a developing organism, if it did not outgrow old conceptions, ancient religion abounding in magic and miracle once satisfactory would be always satisfactory. But there is an ongoing of the social process. Enlightenment and law are inseparable. The path of human progress is out of the undifferentiated, indiscriminated experience into law and order. Religion is a part of the process and must be brought within the pale of law. Loose ends within the realm of experience mean chaos. Religion

must be a part of the continuum if it is to be real and vital. We cannot hope to succeed in living ancient or mediaeval religion when we are modern in every other aspect of human experience. Religion needs the definite past historical setting less than the warmth of living contact with modern life and modern problems.

At this point the advantage of the functional view emerges, for it insists that the test of the highest and most valuable type of religion is not to be found in a past miraculous setting, but in the actual contribution religion makes toward the betterment of human conditions now. The test of religion is not to be found in mere conformity to the Bible, but in the ability to make better men and women and thereby to hasten the coming of the kingdom. This implies that the test of real religion must itself be true to the actual modern needs of life. In so far as the Bible inculcates principles that have vital application to present-day conditions, it has the same right to a hearing that all goodness has. In so far as it fails to do this it may furnish very instructive historical data, yet as a norm of life it should be no criterion.

4. The functional view bids a welcome to the evolution of religious thought, practice, and principles. If God has spoken to man in the far past, if he has sought to reveal himself to humanity in olden times, why should he not do so now when man has reached greater intellectual and moral heights? It would hardly seem probable that he would have nothing further to contribute in matters of religion, while he is making so many contributions in other aspects of human experience.

We may assert definitely that there has been a real evolution of religious thought and practice, and that by virtue of this fact the hypothesis of a closed revelation is shown to be inadequate. Slavery affords an example of a practice which has been outgrown. The Old Testament frankly allows it. Neither Jesus nor the apostles inveighed against it. No serious moral problem seems to have arisen in their minds regarding it. In the modern world, however, the situation is reversed. In the United States slavery became one of the most important causes of a long and bloody war, which resulted in the emancipation of the slave and thereby sounded the death-knell of the institution. The Golden Rule, it may be urged,

actually covers that case and others that are at hand for citation. While this is true, it also remains a fact that the process whereby potentiality becomes actuality, the undifferentiated differentiated, and the implicit explicit, is precisely what is meant by evolution.

It is interesting in this connection to note that many modern conservative theologians are writing profusely on matters of religion. Great quantities of devotional literature have been and are being published. Why? If it be because the Bible is difficult to comprehend, then manifestly there must be an evolution of exposition, and revelation as such is not closed. Again, if it be because the Bible presentation is inadequate for modern needs, then the necessity of making new contributions is avowedly admitted. These and similar difficulties are avoided by taking a functional view of religion and frankly admitting that religion must be progressive, that there must be an evolution of religious thought and practice with advancing stages of culture.

5. The functional view of religion is a great systematizing and co-ordinating agency in human experience. The modern scientific attitude and the so-called orthodox religious attitude are in conflict. The modern scientist can be orthodox in religion only by entertaining an inconsistency. The situation is not unlike trying to mix oil and water. The foundation of modern science is the uniformity of the laws of Nature. The God of the scientist is a law-abiding, orderly being. The God of orthodox religion is in last analysis arbitrary; for orthodoxy has not realized the ideal given by Jesus of a completely socialized God, nor does its God act solely according to law. Magic, wonder, and the cultivation of abnormal experiences are alien to the ideals of science. In the instance of orthodoxy these are highly cherished and cultivated. Orthodoxy seeks for the special presence of God in the unusual. This seeking for the greatest values of life in the realm of abnormal experiences rather than in the ordered, systematic realm of reason is foreign to science.

The functional criterion of the best and truest religion is, as we have seen, strictly pragmatic. It asks whether the religion under consideration fits into the rest of human experience, whether it is making a real contribution to the ongoing of the social process.

Not dualism of experience, not conflict within experience, but systematic continuous experience is its ideal. The God of religion and the God of science dare not be in eternal conflict with one another. This systematization of experience is achieved by recognizing that the religious idea of God must grow with the discoveries of natural science and the progressive ideals of the social sciences. The idea of God advances apace with culture and becomes a systematizing co-ordinating factor in experience.

If, now, it is a fact that the functional view frees religion from the trammels of legalism and external authority, brings it into essential harmony with the religious principles of Jesus, makes the criterion of religion the actual contribution of religion to the ongoing of the highest social process, opens the way for the evolution of religious thought, practice, and principles, and gives religion the place of a great systematizing, co-ordinating agency in experience, it is manifest that, far from detracting from religion, the functional view really adds materially to its life and usefulness. While the dispelling of naïveté may appear to be a grievous loss, the contrary is actually true. If religion is obliged to take refuge in ignorance and naïveté in order to subsist, it is doomed before the mighty strokes of science. The functional view of religion comes in the capacity of an enlarging, fulfilling factor. It means better, larger, more vital religion. He who holds to this live and growing conception will advance into a broader, higher liberty than dogmatism knows, and will take his place as a potent factor in the uplift of humanity. Applied functional religion means a more speedy coming of the kingdom of righteousness.

## THE FALSE PERSPECTIVE OF RELIGIOUS ENTHUSIASM

---

REV. HAROLD S. BREWSTER  
New York, N.Y.

---

Religion ought to have before all things a keen sense of truth. It should be the highest inspiration toward righteousness, which it cannot be unless it knows how to determine facts rightly, and how, in accordance with those facts, to order itself in the right way. Such is the ideal, but unfortunately it has never been to any large extent the actual state of the case. For there has been a general tendency on the part of the religious mind to misunderstand, to misinterpret, and to misuse facts. The tendency, as will be indicated later, has even gone so far as to insert fictitious circumstances into the records of the past. Thus the vision of higher facts has become defective; its images are all likely to be more or less distorted, and it is often blind to many things.

Obviously this fact and its bearing are very important; and some considerations are herewith offered in order to illustrate and to explain, to a certain extent, what may be called the false perspective of religious enthusiasm. This is not done in any contempt for religious enthusiasm, but rather with a regretful sense of the ill effects of the false perspective. However inadequate the result may be, it is done in the interest of the truth that should go hand in hand with religion. It is an endeavor to disparage the processes by which religious prejudice works against the perception of actual fact.

But it may be noted in passing that religious prejudice is not the only kind of prepossession that injuriously affects judgment of truth. Abt Vogler at his instrument says:

Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and the woe;  
But God has a few of us whom he whispers in the ear;  
The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

But Abt Vogler was a musician; if he had been a biologist, a man of letters, an artist, or a banker, he still would have believed that

his life-interest gave him a unique understanding of the world. In fact, no one is so convinced of the finality of his peculiar point of view as is the man of low habits who, with a cynical sneer, will tell you that he "knows the world"; and he would scoff at the thought that the ideal minister has as much insight into human nature as he has, although it is a fact that the ministers, seeing human nature at its best, must know the worst, because it is never so at its best as when it is fighting the worst evils.

We need not think, therefore, that non-religious interests have any peculiar advantage in seeing truth accurately. Prejudice is an innate quality of human nature, and it is not necessarily intensified by religion. The author of *Robert Elsmere* was (probably still is) as dogmatically certain that miracles do not happen as was Cardinal Newman that they do. Matthew Arnold spoke with papal finality as to his conclusions with regard to Old Testament thought, which escaped even more completely many essentials of that thought than the rules and canons of the various churches escape the spirit of the gospel of Christ. Likewise scientific dogmatism may fail as much in giving the whole truth as does religious dogmatism. It is perfectly natural that the great scientists who did so much for the discovery of new truths should still have been subject to the innate dogmatic tendency after they had cast aside their old religion. Their life and thought were centered upon the physical universe, and they instinctively formed the dogma that life is narrowed down to materialistic confines. They immediately felt a need for infallibilism, and the chemistry of today is an echo of the theology of yesterday; there we see the dogmatic men of the old school vainly trying to uphold the doctrine of the element as the final division of matter against the more open-minded younger men who may soon demonstrate that there is one original substance out of which the elements arise. Moreover, Christian theology does not suffer more from old ideas that pervert the spirit of the gospel than the law suffers from old precedents and interpretations that defeat the ends of justice. The church is not more divided into intolerant sects than the medical profession is divided into opposing schools which refuse to see good in each other, even when it is demonstrated. Dogmatism is everywhere present with us.

Even the heretic is likely to be dogmatically certain of the finality of his own conclusions. It is often true that his spirit has more of the essential Christian kindness than that of his angry pursuer; and yet he does not always display the humility that ought to be the open-minded Christian attitude which, having given up infallibilism, should be ready to question even the conservation of energy if new evidence should point in that direction.

But we are not concerned here with prejudices other than the religious. Of all the institutions among men religion ought primarily to be open to new truth, and yet she has let her prepossessions make havoc of her understanding of actual fact. We need not go outside the familiar history of the Christian religion to find intelligence made defective and morality perverted through prejudice.

Perhaps no worse example could be given than the persecution of heretics in the name of Christ. We may not be sure that it always takes a thief to catch a thief, but we may be dogmatically certain that it always takes a heretic to catch a heretic; for never can the intellectual pride and the unkind attitude of the heresy-hunter be harmonized with the humility and sympathetic love that are the first essentials of the teaching of Jesus. In the heresy controversies of Christendom the constraining love of Christ has been hideously perverted into a lust for blood.

But religious enthusiasm was similarly perverse in the doctrine of monasticism. Jerome's teaching of the perpetual virginity of the mother of Christ was vastly more of a distortion of plain Scripture than the idea of the full human parentage of Jesus is of the Creed. In the Jewish mother's way of thinking, when Mary lived, it was "a reproach among women" not to have children; and Jerome's contrary teaching caused a tremendous loss to Christianity in preventing so many of the best men and women from passing on their qualities through heredity. It brought about such a perversion of righteousness that it was considered a holy act for Augustine, after his conversion, to leave the mother of his boy a woman of the street.

Again there is that constant tendency on the part of all branches of the Christian church to return to some form of the Pharisaic legalism against which the original gospel was a protest. It has



been noticed more particularly in that type of Christianity technically called Catholicism, which has emphasized the formal and ceremonial and which, in spite of the injunction that the greatest must be the servant of all, has exalted the office in such a way that "My Lord Bishop" has become a common title where supreme humility is demanded. But evangelical Protestantism has also its strict legal aspect, little in accord with the free gospel, as is shown in the former stringent rules against pleasures that need not be harmful, like card-playing and dancing, or against attendance at the theater, which may be made a real uplift in spiritual development.

Not so painful as these circumstances to consider but very significant for the subject is the whole field of history written from the ecclesiastical bias. The spirit of such history is suggested by Mr. Chesterton's excellent criticism of Dickens' *Child's History of England*, in which he indicates that the difficulty with the book as sober history is that the author could not relieve his mind of the impression that St. Dunstan was seriously interested in preventing the passage of the Reform Bill. It is the quintessence of that spirit which led the writer in *Chronicles*, feeling that the details of his own ecclesiastical system were so essential that they must have existed from of old, to picture the court of David in the way it should have been, without reference to the very different picture in the Second Book of Samuel.

In fact the method of the Chronicler is strikingly instructive with regard to the subject in hand. His purpose is to make his readers feel that his own religious system is vitally important and all else is made subordinate to this purpose. Ancient prophets who dealt with circumstances wholly remote from his point of view are made to preach his ideas; and figures so entirely out of proportion to those dealing with the same facts in the books of Samuel and Kings as to result in glaring contradictions have found their way into his work. The process of the development of the Jewish ecclesiastical system from age to age can be traced to a great extent in the Old Testament documents of each succeeding generation; but in *Chronicles*, the final stage of this long development is made to appear as if it were existing in completeness centuries before it could have been known.

And yet in spite of the fact that the Chronicler had the books of Samuel and of Kings, with their statements so contrary to his own, before him, he may have written in perfectly good faith; and the psychological process involved in such writing will be considered presently. Of course we know that the mediaeval church invented pious frauds with the deliberate purpose of deceiving, but only a small part of the historical misconceptions of religion is the result of deliberate fraud.

In this matter there is a vast difference between the intention to be honest and real truthfulness. It is with honest intention that some Roman Catholic authors throw their system back into the past and think of St. Peter as a real pope, or dress the early clergy in ecclesiastical vestments. To be sure a great Roman Catholic scholar like the Abbé Duchesne will frankly give his opinion that vestments are a comparatively late development in the cultus; but that opinion will not go very far among those who like to feel that vestments are an uninterrupted inheritance from the Hebrew church. Likewise there is a tendency on the part of the ecclesiastically minded to see their own system of worship in use at the beginning, and to imagine the "Catholic Liturgies" as fully developed in the time when Justin Martyr left his contemporary record of the use of extemporary prayer in the services of the church. They will go back even to the early apostolic age and see, where St. Paul describes something not unlike the old type of Methodist or the modern Salvation Army meeting, a stately mass. In fact in that diverting recent Anglican vagary which makes St. Paul the bringer of the Gospel to England, one of the crowning arguments is the presence of the Pauline liturgy!

But such familiar distortions of fact by ecclesiastical writers are innumerable. In some quarters it is reverently believed that in the so-called "Great Forty Days" between the Resurrection and the Ascension, Jesus set forth a complete body of doctrine with regard to the church system which is nowhere even suggested in his recorded words. Again, there is the theory doggedly maintained, in some places, that the Church of England was never really in sympathy with the Church of Rome, although in order to get a sense of the absurdity of such a notion one has but to think

of the pained expression that would have passed over the placid face of the Venerable Bede—a fairly representative Anglican churchman of the old time—if it had been suggested to him that Rome was not the seat of authority.

These misconceptions on the part of Christian believers find an interesting parallel in the new time sermons recently reported from Constantinople. In one of them, the Moslem preacher Isma'il Hakki Effendi, dealing with the modern movement, is reported to have said, "Oh, reverend jurists, there is no religion, no code, which advocates constitutionalism as strongly as does Islam." But as far as we Westerners have any evidence, the good preacher is confusing his own enlightenment with a dark past.

Now in all these cases the mental process involved is closely connected with that fascinating psychic force which has received so much attention of late under the name of suggestion. Hypnotism is the most striking manifestation of that force but there is a resemblance almost amounting to identity between pure hypnotism and the condition that produces the mental results just noted. For it is the characteristic of hypnotism that a dominant suggestion so influences the hypnotized subject that the surrounding conditions appear to him to coincide perfectly with that suggestion—that hard actual facts are remolded instantly in conformity to his so-called consciousness. People and things out of harmony with the hypnotized person's dominant suggestion may occupy the center of the field of normal vision without making any impression upon him; and at the same time the solid floor may appear to him as flowing water, the furniture of the room may seem as rocks and trees, while out of nowhere may come birds and flowers. But there is no sharp line of demarkation separating this marvelous phenomenon from the various more usual manifestations of the same process.

There is, for example, the loss of judgment common under the excitement of a religious revival; or the obliviousness to facts in the mind of the political partisan who, under the dominance of the suggestion of this party's glory, votes, in the course of time, for the most contradictory policies; or that strange phenomenon which we have all noted with wonder, of the person of somewhat set opinion

but good mind, who, apparently having accepted a convincing argument or having been told some new fact, will presently talk as if such an idea had never entered his mind. But none of these cases is more close to hypnotism itself than the pseudo-historical judgment just described. The dominant idea of the man with the religious prejudice creates impressions of the past that have no part in actuality while it makes him oblivious to facts that did exist. Thus the Chronicler was so utterly at the mercy of his idea of what the history of the past ought to have been that his mind was impervious to any true impression of what the books of Samuel and Kings set forth. He eliminates from the records of the past or inserts into them whatever his ruling suggestion demands by a process that surely is not related to scientific history and that most probably he felt to be truthful.

But the Chronicler's mental process is not one whit different from that of the religious students of his work almost down to the present day. The glaring inconsistencies between himself and his predecessors were hardly noticed or else explained away in trivial arguments by men whose minds were really great, and who were perfectly familiar with the entire Bible. They were under the dominant suggestion of the inerrancy of the Scriptures, and difficulties like the two varying accounts of the death of Judas or the contradiction between the Sermon on the Mount and the imprecatory Psalms were to them inconsiderable.

Everywhere this strange mental habit interferes with the vision of truth; and one will not get very far with the solution of a problem like that of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel, for instance, either if he starts with the firm conviction that the apostle must have written it, or if he begins with the immovable assurance that this could not be the case. A German scholar may have his whole truth-getting faculty weakened by a desire to connect his name with the establishment of a certain theory, just as easily as an orthodox English conservative may lose true judgment in saving this faith. Schmiedel is as thoroughly oblivious to the exaltation of the character of Jesus Christ in the Synoptic Gospels as Pusey was to the insurmountable difficulties in the old theory of the nature of the Book of Daniel.

Now in the religious misunderstanding of fact, the controlling idea to which all else has had to conform has usually been that of infallible authority. In so-called Catholicism, the church itself has been the final authority, and all truth has had to be interpreted in accordance with the mind of the church: so that such treatment as the Modernists are receiving today by the Roman church has been, in the Roman Catholic premises, necessary whenever new teaching has appeared. But Protestantism, as soon as it arose, also felt a need for an unquestionable authority, and it turned instinctively to the inerrant finality of the Scriptures, which had always been understood as a fact by the church and in which idea the difficulties had diminished as the prevailing ignorance increased. Of course the differing points of view in the supposedly infallible Scriptures allowed a wider field of vision than the one official view of the church, but orthodox Protestantism has had increasing difficulty and has produced more and more grotesque results in trying to make the new conform to the old.

But new truth will insist upon coming to the light. In the end it is accepted in spite of supposed authority to the contrary. In the Bible monarchy is the received form of government, and for centuries rulers have had the solemn anointing of the church; but Protestant believers in the Bible have been largely influential in building up a republic on this continent to which the authoritative voices of the Roman Catholic prelates have given adherence. Slavery is sanctioned in the Bible, and it was allowed by the early church; but in the modern Christian consciousness it is as much an evil as the polygamy which the Old Testament attributes to the patriarchs and nowhere forbids.

Facts like these should make Christian believers see that the perception of truth is a growing thing. They should learn from them that each succeeding age attains a new vision that ought to readjust old understandings rather than be readjusted by them. But to see new truth clearly and to understand it properly is a very difficult process.

For humanity is weak in its exercise of the power of judgment. The law itself has not developed any appreciable capacity for judging a case righteously in accordance with its present intrinsic

merits; it still relies largely upon the inadequate and contradictory authorities of the past. In such a matter, likewise, as the study of history it is easier to quote blindly some good historian in regard to a mooted point than to try to find whether the generally accurate writer has not, in this case, succumbed to the error that will, at times, interfere with the best human judgment. But judgment is nowhere more lacking than in the ordinary method of religious argumentation which piles up everything that can be said in favor of the point it desires to establish, magnifying trivialities that make for its establishment, and minimizing all that is strong in the opposing point of view. There is a lack of that true reasonableness which weighs evidence accurately, determining justly the weaknesses on one's own side, and accrediting honestly that which is weighty in the contrary belief.

This is the process that really determines personality; and it should be noted that the method is more than simple logic. True reason requires something besides the automatic working of the logical faculty. For logic is practically automatic; and within his premises, the insane man is, as a rule, perfectly logical. The logic of the hypnotized person, also, is mechanically exact in accordance with his controlling suggestion. In those strange so-called dual and multiple personalities the suggestion of the new personality is adhered to, sometimes for years, with unswerving logic. But the so-called dual personality is not a personality at all. With apologies to the memory of the painstaking work of F. W. H. Myers, the phenomenon lacks precisely that which gives true personality—the judgment that can weigh suggestions wisely and that can determine the approximate value of premises.

The lack of such judgment in the masses is the strength of the cheap revivalist as well as of the political boss. It is also the cause of the too long persistence of many outworn religious assumptions. If religion is to be healthy and strong, maintaining the new growth characteristic of every living thing, it must maintain this sane power of discerning the weight of its premises.

In such attainment two qualities are essential. First there is the humility that overcomes the intellectual pride of infallibilism. It is the childlike willingness to learn which is necessary for the

salvation of erring humanity. The child realizes that he does not know very much, and he is eager to learn more; and that attitude is imitated by the scientific investigator in his peculiar sphere. The man of science, to be sure, often assumes an unworthy attitude of finality in matters concerning philosophy and religion to which he has not given due attention; but in his laboratory, he sits humbly in the presence of actual facts and lets them speak to him without any suggestive interruption on his part.

That man, that nation, or that church which cannot, in this humble spirit, open itself to new light is doomed, sooner or later, to grope in blinding darkness. No more instructive lesson in history has ever been taught than that which we learned only yesterday when we saw a tremendous empire, in which it is a crime to breathe the slightest syllable against either Church or state, biting the dust before a small island people which is constantly sending keen observers into every corner of the world in order to find how it may improve itself. The Japanese defeat of Russia is a splendid test of the value of the childlike willingness to learn—the humility that waits on faith.

The other essential quality is sympathy. We can never understand anything with which we cannot, in some way, sympathize. We must in imagination put ourselves in our opponents' places if we are to know and tell the truth about them. If one has ever read a Buddhist or a Mohammedan discussion of Christianity with its insistence that the mistakes of Christendom are the necessary outcome of the Christian system, he can get a fair idea of the ordinary Christian discussion of Buddhism or of Mohammedanism. It is the most difficult intellectual process to comprehend fairly unaccustomed feeling or thought. It demands that we shall not indiscriminately attribute to that thought and feeling qualities which our logic would find to be a necessary inference from them. In all probability those who hold to a different system from ours do not apply our logic to it. If we are to understand them, we are not to tell them what they ought to think and feel under their premises, but we are to let them tell us what they actually do think and feel. Intellectually speaking, many who have entertained "strangers have thereby entertained angels unawares."

Now, if there be any truth in the foregoing discussion, there is a call today, in religion, for very careful and accurate thinking. If a man has no interest in religion he cannot be sure, for that reason, that his mental perspective is not falsified by some other prejudice. If a man is interested in religion, he ought, for the purification of that religion, to be as sure as he may that his view of truth is not obstructed or darkened through his enthusiasm. If his faith is really strong and free he will not hesitate to use honestly the highest gift his Maker has bestowed upon him—his judgment.



## CHRISTIANITY AND CRITICAL THEOLOGY

GERALD BIRNEY SMITH  
University of Chicago

Will Christianity be religiously stronger or weaker if it welcome the critical method of studying the Bible and the consequent critical attitude toward the problems of theology? Upon the answer to this practical question rightly depends the attitude of Christian people. The full consequences of the critical method will not be seen until this question is faced. Some aspects of the problem will be considered in this article.

The attitude of Christianity toward critical learning has presented puzzling contrasts. At times it has employed the most thoroughgoing scholarship in the exposition of its doctrines. At other times it has revolted from the alleged barrenness of science and philosophy, and has made its primary appeal to an intuitive religious experience. This mingled sentiment of trust and distrust reveals the fact that scientific methods may be either an aid or a hindrance to the religious life. On the one hand, the truth of religion itself lies deeper than the truth of mere statements about religion, no matter how accurate the latter may be; on the other hand, if religion cannot appeal to the best scholarship of the day for its support, it loses its influence over the strongest minds.

A recent book devoted to the problem of the significance of our beliefs for our fundamental religious experience has a chapter bearing the suggestive title, "How Ideas of Ideas Misrepresent Them."<sup>1</sup> Following the lead of modern psychology, the author calls attention to the fact that ideas are primarily what we think *with* in order to interpret our experience, and only secondarily objects of meditation. But it is possible to make the ideas themselves objects of thought. If this process of abstraction is carried far enough, it is evident that the "ideas of ideas" may seriously

<sup>1</sup>Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience*, chap. vii. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1912.

misrepresent the reality which is always fundamental. In such a case, religion rightly protests against the perversion which comes from devoting too much attention to secondary rather than primary aspects of experience.

Nevertheless, experience cannot thrive without using ideas. And ideas cannot be most helpfully used without a criticism of their adequacy. This task of criticism is what theology undertakes in order to provide Christian life and endeavor with the best conceptual tools possible for the propagation and explanation of the Christian message. So long as theology embodies the recognition of this as its primary business, it is welcomed as a positive aid to religion. But when it neglects this relationship between its theories and the religious life which the theories serve to organize; when, in other words, it comes to be more interested in "ideas of ideas" than in the function of ideas in religious experience, it may incur the distrust of those who are concerned for the vigor and the purity of the religious life. The reaction against such a barren theology sometimes takes the form of a mystical appeal to "feeling" or to "experience" without any clear apprehension of the way in which this religion of pure experience may organize itself so as to avoid the reproach of hopeless subjectivity. Sometimes the attempt is made to substitute for the ideas of the objectionable theology the "authoritative" ideas of Scripture or of creed. Thus in the past the revolt against an academic theology has usually issued either in emotional pietism or in scriptural or creedal legalism. But the spirit of Christianity cannot be satisfied with either. Hence the revolts have not secured any permanently satisfactory basis for the construction of beliefs.

Now a third possibility is furnished by a critical theology based on the principles which emerge from the historical method of studying religion. Instead of seeking to correct a barren theological scholarship by an appeal to "experience" without any provision for scientific analysis, or by an appeal to an authorized system of ideas which, because of their claims to authority, are regarded as immune from criticism, it now becomes possible to seek the aid of scientific means of analyzing the significance of religious ideas, so as to determine what it is that makes a doctrine helpful to religious

life and what constitutes a harmful influence in theoretical endeavors. That conception of the function of doctrine in religious life which is disclosed by a historical understanding of religion makes it possible to enlist the aid of exact scholarship in the very reaction from intellectual formalism which ordinarily in the past has led to a breach between Christianity and the science of the day. Let us now consider this aspect of critical scholarship.

One of the most significant of the conclusions of modern scholarship is the recognition of the fact that religion is a fundamental and primary activity of the human spirit. Science or philosophy cannot create religion. The scientific investigator can only observe and analyze what he finds in the actual experience of man. The great French philosopher, Comte, with all his eagerness to organize a scientifically determined religion which should supplant crude faiths and unite men in the worship and the service of humanity, failed to attract more than a handful of followers. Religion is not dependent on science or culture or philosophy for its existence. It is a great fundamental reality due to the practical need of man for superhuman aid in his struggle with the adverse forces of his environment. The scientific study of religion today takes away our fear lest religion shall perish without the aid of scholarship. Without such aid it may, indeed, become crude and fanatical; but it will not perish. But, on the other hand, scholarship can never take the place of religion; for life insists upon the enrichment which can come only through the practical channels of prayer and communion with the unseen divine presence.

In addition to this recognition of the primary character of religion another significant fact must be noted. Those religions which actually have the greatest power to survive and to grow by missionary and evangelical activity owe their origin to the profound religious experience of some founder, who disclosed in his life and teaching the possibilities of a deeper, richer relationship to the unseen source of spiritual vigor and comfort. The great religions of the world today are named after personal originators. The significant modifications of such religions are due to the creative experience and insight of prophets and reformers. The more accurately we know the facts about Christianity, the more clear it

becomes that the real essence of our religion must be sought through an understanding of the inner life of those who revealed to others the secret of a more profound religious experience. In order to know Christianity, we must know Jesus and the great persons in Christian history whose lives have been made into creative centers of spiritual influence through the transforming power of Jesus.

Professor Paul Wernle, of Basel, in his recently published manual intended to introduce students to the meaning of modern theological scholarship,<sup>2</sup> makes the suggestive distinction between what he calls original, or "first-hand," religion (*Religion aus erster Hand*) and secondary, or traditional, religion. There are great religious geniuses, upon whose insight multitudes of men are dependent. Just in so far as acquaintance with these original sources of religious insight is neglected, one's own religious life is restricted. Even the most thoroughgoing study of theological doctrines falls far short of the value to be found in a knowledge of the experience of a man who furnishes "at first hand" a revelation of the meaning of religion. Indeed, the doctrines of institutional Christianity derive their value from the fact that they represent attempts to work over and to make clear the significance of the revelation derived from the original personal sources of real religion.

This emphasis on the part of modern scholarship differentiates it from the "rationalism" of former days which religious men so dread. If the outcome of a critical study of religion were to transfer our affections and our sense of dependence away from the great personalities of the Bible and of Christian history, and to persuade men to try to live solely by the inspiration which might be derived from rational theories, such scholarship would indeed be dangerous to the positive interests of Christianity. But if the critical-historical method, when logically complete, leads to a new appreciation of the significance of the great creative sources of religion, it can but deepen and strengthen the religious life which is dependent on these sources for its vigor. For, as has been repeatedly insisted in our discussions, the historical method forbids us to deal with doctrines in isolation from the life which found expression in the doctrines. And when that life has been discovered, it is traceable

<sup>2</sup> *Einführung in das theologische Studium*. 2<sup>te</sup> Auflage. Tübingen: Mohr, 1911.

to the prophets and the seers and the reformers who arise in the course of the development of religion.

It must be admitted that critical scholarship, like other types of scholarship, must often plead guilty to much emphasis on detailed technical scholarship, as if such scholarship somehow would reveal the essence of religion. It is just as possible to substitute for real religious study a purely intellectual interest in the questions of date and authorship as it is to substitute formal theology for genuine piety. A pride in one's knowledge of higher criticism is no more conducive to religious profundity than is a pride in one's mastery of a distinctive system of doctrine. In so far as a man thinks he is a better Christian just because he is sophisticated, he is far from the spirit of Jesus. The details of criticism no more yield the realities of religion than do the philological investigations of the classical scholars the spiritual significance of Plato. If one stop short with the mere intellectual problems, one has missed the very reality for the understanding of which the intellectual processes ought to prepare. If one can look beyond the grammars and the rhetorical rules and the philological connections to the literature, all scholarship contributes to a deeper appreciation of the spiritual message. But if these technical problems become ends in themselves, or come to claim one's total attention, they may stand in the way of a better understanding of Christianity. It is incumbent on critical scholarship to bring clearly to light the advantage which it possesses in its apprehension of the relation between religious experience and doctrinal formulations, so that it shall not stop short of its entire opportunity. Fortunately the time is well-nigh past when "higher criticism" can be mistakenly viewed as a superior form of cultured religion. Criticism is simply a *means* by which we may determine more accurately than was formerly possible the exact character of the religion of the biblical literature. But only as our hearts shall burn with zeal to become disciples of those who so clearly and vigorously expounded the meaning of a life with God can we gain from the Bible that which it may yield.

Whether a man is a Christian or not is not determined by the method he uses in studying the literature of Christianity. One could use all the canons of critical method in the study of the rise

and the growth of Mormonism without becoming a Mormon. So it will not necessarily make men Christians to adopt the critical method of studying the Bible. Only as the content of the biblical religion shall make its appeal will one become a disciple of the prophets and of Jesus. But the more accurate presentation of the content of the biblical religion which is made possible by critical methods ought to bring us face to face with the necessity for a significant moral decision. So long as it was possible to use such inexact methods of exegesis that men could claim the authority of the Bible for a form of religion which was congenial to their preferences, they might fail to face the fundamental summons of the religion of the Bible. But if critical scholarship does its work; if as a result of such scholarship, we know accurately the content of biblical religion, there is no possibility of self-deception.

What is it, then, that we find as a result of our critical study of the great original sources of the Christian religion? What emerges from a critical examination of the utterances of the Bible and of the beliefs of the great expounders of Christianity? What is the fundamental choice set before men, on the basis of which one decides whether or not one is a Christian?

Criticism has shown that the Old Testament is best understood as a monument to the religion of the prophets. It is true that we find in the Old Testament traces of primitive beliefs and practices, and we can observe the hardening effects of ecclesiastical interests. But the significant thing about that literature is the way in which all these earlier cults and all the later ecclesiastical developments were compelled to recognize and to embody the fundamental message of the prophets. The religion of Israel represents a development of beliefs and practices in accordance with the necessities of political, social, and economic life, embodies the specific interests and emphases demanded by that life; but all came to be interpreted in the light of the prophetic message. It is this prophetic religion which makes the Old Testament so significant. To the men of old who heard the messages of the prophets, and to the men of later times who read those messages comes a fundamental summons. That summons takes the form of a demand that the facts of life be faced in all their evil aspects and that anyone who

proposes to be religious shall make his religion consist in repentance for the evil which is being committed and in whole-hearted devotion to the will of the God of righteousness. All else is subordinate to this great issue. There can be no hiding behind the defenses of liturgical or ritual conformity, no blind trust in ready-made theological formulae. The primary question is whether one is willing to repent for his sins and to seek the favor of God through devotion to a righteous life. We are rediscovering in our own day how thoroughly in accord with the demands of what we call the "social gospel" is this message of the prophets.

Moreover, the prophets did not hesitate to criticize adversely any theology which stood in the way of this fundamental moral decision. Without it, true religion was, in their estimation, impossible. If the choice lay between moral honesty and the retention of religious forms which had received the sanction of approved usage, the religious forms must be eradicated or transformed. Even the word of an earlier prophet might be so repeated by disciples that it was denounced by a later prophet as "false," just because it was leading men to trust in something other than the honest facing of the facts in the spirit of moral earnestness. Criticism has clearly revealed this character of the prophetic message. It has at the same time made it evident that we cannot today honestly assent to some of the beliefs which are recorded in the Old Testament. It thus sets before us a choice similar to that which was demanded of the men by the prophets themselves, and brings us face to face with the question whether we are willing to commit ourselves at any cost in religious self-surrender to the demands of personal and social righteousness. Only through such surrender can we expect the highest superhuman aid in our life.

This fundamental summons of the prophets was reaffirmed by Jesus. With unwavering clearness he revealed the damaging character of a trust in rites or beliefs if it did not mean a complete self-surrender to the righteous purposes of God. Although he engaged in no criticism of the current belief that the Old Testament was the authoritative word of God, he did not hesitate to criticize adversely any interpretation of the Scriptures which blunted the edge of simple humanitarian morality; and did not

hesitate to characterize a certain Mosaic provision as the refuge of those whose hardened hearts prevented them from seeing the higher ideal. To this repetition of the prophetic message, Jesus added the unfathomable experience of a life constantly in closest communion with God, so that his absolute devotion to his own ideals was seen to mean the presence of God in his innermost being. Because of this peculiar possession of inner power as the practical evidence of the truth of his religious message, he spoke to his followers "with authority," and has since remained to all generations the supremely significant source of religious inspiration and insight. No one can understand the story of the life of Jesus without being brought face to face with the most searching scrutiny of the motives of his inner life. One must make the great decision for or against the ideal which Jesus presents.

Just as the Old Testament gains its significance from the fact that it is the record of the determined attempts of men to think out their problems in the light of the prophetic message, so the New Testament becomes for the critical student the record of the ways in which men of the first century tried to interpret their world of thought and action under the sway of the summons of Jesus. As a result of this critical understanding of the Bible, it becomes impossible to substitute for the spiritual summons of the prophets and of Jesus a demand that we shall simply conform to the doctrines of the Bible. Such a demand would so signally distract attention from the fundamental message of the religion of the Bible as to bring the danger that the real spirit of Christianity might be lost beneath incidental forms as the real spirit of the prophets was lost beneath scribal interpretation of the Scriptures in Jesus' day. Who shall say that this danger is an imaginary one, when we note the theological controversies of Christian history? We need ever to be helped to look back of the details of biblical doctrines so as to perceive this fundamental summons to an honest facing of the moral problem as that without which biblical doctrine would cease to have the power which it has exerted in human history.

A Christian is one who makes an affirmative response to this fundamental summons, and who then seeks to give such an interpretation to his life and to the world in which he must live as



to make effective the choice which he has made. In early days this gave rise to a theology which was so impressed by the existing tremendous opposition to Christian ideals, that it despaired of finding the Kingdom in this evil age. Faith in the righteous God, who spoke through the prophets and who so dwelt in Jesus that the character of God was manifested for the help and the salvation of men, therefore took the form of a separatist ethics and a theology which pictured ideals in terms of another world rather than in terms of an evolution of this world. The important thing, however, is that the power of the faith which Jesus inspired was strong enough to dominate this eschatological theology, and through it to enable men to withstand persecution and to endure sacrifice for the sake of loyalty to Christ. Because it kept Christians true to the best that they knew and thus enabled them to put spiritual things first, it received the reverence and the honor which eventually led to its canonization.

But the eschatological theology of the New Testament is not the only way in which this conquering spirit of the religion of Jesus found expression. As the power of the community which had been transformed by the experience of salvation through Christ grew, men arose who began to dream of a conquest of this world in the name and through the power of Christ. Professor Percy Gardner, in a suggestive book,<sup>3</sup> has narrated the successive "baptisms" by which the practices and the institutions and the learning of the world, which were originally distrusted, became transformed by the power of the Christian spirit, until at the end of the Middle Ages western civilization was all formally under the dominion of the Christian church. The learning of Plato and of Aristotle had been made to promote men's certainty of the existence of the God of the prophets and of Jesus. Gods and heroes of paganism had been transformed into saints and had humbly submitted to the lordship of Christ, so that they were now significant because in some signal way they were believed to have embodied Christian virtues. The haughty power of pagan Rome had fallen, and the vicar of Christ occupied the seat of the Caesars. Such a triumph of Christianity over the secular forces of the western world was something for which the early disciples did not dare to hope.

<sup>3</sup> *The Development of Christianity.*

Of course, this larger program made necessary a larger theology. If men were to be able to make the spirit of Christ actually dominant they must give to the world in which they lived a Christian interpretation. It is true that there thus came into Christian theology many elements quite unlike those which found expression in the New Testament. It is also true that in the enlargement it was possible for the emphasis to be placed on items which were not at all essential to Christianity. But we ought not to forget that the abuses which crept in were again and again detected and corrected by loyal men who had been influenced by the real spirit of the Bible and who had felt the power of the ethical religion there set forth. From these reformers as well as from the men of the Bible we may learn the power of Christianity. Augustine, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Bernard, Savonarola, Luther, Wesley, and others keep alive for us the light of the gospel, and show us how it could conquer new worlds of thought and action.

We are today beginning to realize what it means to live in the larger universe which has been disclosed by the science and the discoveries of recent times. Our situation is, in a way, similar to that of the early Christians, who felt that the big world was so indifferent to their message and so hostile to the rule of the Messiah, that the culmination of faith could come only in another world. We have awakened to the fact that the universe of modern science seems to make no place for the miracles of grace which men of old dared to affirm; that the nations of the world are one by one freeing themselves from formal connection with the church in order to pursue independent secular policies; that notions of success are abroad which make the self-sacrifice required by Christianity seem like foolish self-defeat; that critical scholarship makes it no longer possible to defend Christian ideals by an appeal to authority, but that these must enter without any special favors into the rough competition of ideals for supremacy. The question of the day is whether Christianity is strong enough to prevail in this new world.

Such a conquest will be possible only as men shall be able to convince themselves that the splendid ideals which dominate the biblical thought and which have had such a triumphant history are actually practicable in the modern world. If we are really per-

suaed that the Copernican astronomy and the evolutionary view of human history are true, and if at the same time we should become convinced that the spirit of Christianity required the denial of these doctrines, it would manifestly be impossible for us to remain Christians unless we went back to pre-scientific notions of the nature of the world and of human life. But the intelligent understanding of the history of our religion makes it evident that so sublime a faith as that which has expressed itself in Christian ideals is triumphant just because it is capable of inspiring daring attempts to give to the best wisdom of men a religious interpretation that shall enable them to believe with all their heart in the reality of a righteous, loving God, whose will is to establish righteousness among men so that his Kingdom may come. Already the new interpretations are taking form. The Modernists, both in Catholicism and in Protestantism, cannot be content to allow Christianity to save only those who think in terms of an outgrown science and who fear to trust the honest experiments of men. Christianity, in their estimation, is powerful enough to introduce high religious ideals into the thoughts and the practices of the modern world, as it (in intention and theory, at least) dominated the thoughts and the practices of the mediaeval world.

What, then, is the service which a critical theology can render? It can summon men to dare to be true to the inner conviction which is created by discipleship to Jesus, and to venture to lead the conquest of our modern world in the strength of that faith. It will frankly welcome all scientific, political, and social principles which seem to be true, and will endeavor to give to those principles such a religious interpretation that men may be convinced that the truest manhood and the highest wisdom is to be found only where Christianity shall have disclosed the great moral and religious summons which the Bible has voiced and which Christians for nearly two millenniums have been trying to make effective. A Christian theology for today must, of course, be different from the theology of the New Testament in so far as our ways of thinking and our practical problems are different. It must differ from the theology of primitive Protestantism just in so far as our life brings us into contact with issues different from those of the sixteenth century.

It will expect that the theology of tomorrow will differ from the theology of today just in so far as human life shall be altered by the different science and the different experience of tomorrow. But beneath all these differences in theology it will recognize the abiding power of the spirit of Christ, impelling men of every nation and of every walk of life to give to the world such an interpretation as shall make effective a belief in the righteous purpose and the redeeming power of the God whom Jesus reveals. If this spirit be preserved, we shall have Christianity, no matter how often the theologies in which it finds partial and temporary expression may be altered or even discredited. It is this emphasis on the Religion of the Spirit and this new appreciation of the significance of the message of the Bible which the critical method helps us to acquire. For all who really appreciate the meaning of this attitude, an unparalleled opportunity stands waiting. The new world of our modern science, our modern industry, our modern politics, our modern international relations, our modern missionary enterprise, our modern social problems—yes, and perhaps first and most important, our distracted and pleasure-seeking modern personal life—this world awaits the transforming power of Christian faith. A critical theology today has before it the opportunity for one of the most inspiring constructive tasks ever possible in human history.

## RELIGIOUS WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

---

THOMAS S. EVANS

General Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, the University  
of Pennsylvania

---

The University of Pennsylvania has an enrolment of over five thousand students and a faculty of five hundred and thirty members divided into the following eight departments: Liberal Arts, Science, Finance and Commerce, Medicine, Law, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, and Graduate School. Almost all of the students are men, and the cosmopolitan character of the institution is best illustrated in the fact that there are two hundred and twenty-five foreign students, representing over forty different nations outside of the United States.

The conditions are the more complex because the university is situated in the midst of the great city of Philadelphia. To meet the moral and religious needs of such an institution demands a great variety of activities. The traditions of the institution are distinctly Christian, as is shown in the fact that the first Provosts were Christian ministers, and the custom of daily chapel has continued through the entire history of the institution to the present time.

In view of the history of the university and the complexity of its conditions, it is most interesting to find that the Young Men's Christian Association with its intercollegiate and world-wide affiliations has thus far shown itself to be the best agency for organizing the religious, ethical, and social work of the institution.

The religious activities naturally fall under the three main divisions of worship, study, and service. Under the head of worship is the service held on Sunday morning at eleven o'clock and conducted by leading Christian ministers and laymen of this and other countries. At this service the average attendance last year was 288, varying from 108 to 1,025. The daily chapel service, held each

morning at 8:30 o'clock, and conducted by university professors and ministers of the city, had an average attendance of 56. Both of these exercises are most effective in their spiritual intensity, the five-minute address given each week-day morning being of the highest order.

In the department of study are the groups for the discussion of physical, social, ethical, and religious problems. The work is done on the basis of the Bible and from a world-wide point of view, and, therefore, includes foreign missions. These groups are not conducted by immature undergraduates, but in most cases are led by university professors, ministers of Philadelphia, strong laymen of churches, and experienced association secretaries. Last year there were in the university sixty-six of these groups, with a total enrolment of 1,256. A group usually consists of from six to ten members, meeting weekly in a dormitory house, a fraternity house, a near-by church, or in one of the classrooms of the university.

The approach to the Bible is not through a study of the history, authorship, contents, and teachings of Scripture, but rather by the method of discovering the moral, physical, social, and religious problems of the students and leading them to see that the final answer to these problems is to be found in the Christianity of the Bible. The number of these groups that can be formed and the interest among the undergraduates seems to be limited only by the number of competent leaders who can be secured.

In the department of study are also lectures in the various department buildings by national leaders in the field of sex hygiene, college ethics, social work, foreign missions, and religious principles. Almost invariably these leaders draw a large attendance and sometimes change the current of undergraduate opinion on important matters.

One of the most vital problems of modern student religious work is that of the relationship of the church to the work done among students by special organizations such as the Young Men's Christian Association. For many years the Association was careless with regard to its loyalty to the church and gave inadequate attention to the matter of bringing students into vital relationship to the church of their choice. At the present time the intercol-

legiate Association is taking up this problem with vigor, and is realizing, as never before, its constant responsibility to the church and the necessity of closely identifying all of its activities with the final organized form of Christianity in the church itself. In a cosmopolitan university like Pennsylvania, situated in the midst of the churches of a great city, the problem is most complex. At Pennsylvania something more than twenty different religious denominations are represented in the university body. Each year the Christian Association tries to ascertain, through a careful census, the religious connections and preferences of the new students and places the lists thus obtained in the hands of the local churches and denominational leaders. In the larger denominations—Presbyterian, Episcopal, Methodist, and Lutheran—the Association has employed denominational church secretaries who are either ministers or men of maturity and experience in Christian work. These secretaries co-operate with the local ministers and leaders of religious organizations in the city of Philadelphia.

This method of dealing with the church question from within the university seems to be quite satisfactory to the leaders of the religious denominations in Philadelphia. It has the additional merit of greatly strengthening the internal organization of the Christian Association and presenting to the non-religious element a united Christian appeal. The student Young Men's Christian Association regards itself simply as the agent of the church within the university community. At a recent meeting of the Board of Directors the following series of resolutions were adopted as indicating the policy of the Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania:

*Resolved first*, That the Christian Association of the University of Pennsylvania, with the approval of the Provost of the University, hereby reaffirms its loyalty to the Christian church and its eagerness to promote the cause of organized Christianity.

*Resolved second*, That the Association hereby extends to the properly constituted representatives of every organized religious body the machinery of its organization for the purpose of furthering the efforts of such body to reach its members and adherents within the student community of the University.

*Resolved third*, That the Association will elect to its Secretarial Staff any duly accredited worker representing such a religious body jointly selected by

it and by the Association, with the understanding that the salary received by him for work done in the University shall be paid through the treasury of the Association.

*Resolved fourth*, That the Association is willing to become responsible to any organized religious body for the work of the representative of such body within the University, and to make reports as desired concerning his service, and to make reports not only concerning his special service but on all the work which the Association itself is doing in any way on behalf of the religious body in question.

*Resolved fifth*, That the Association is willing to report to any religious body concerning the work done on behalf of its students in case such body does not have or does not desire to have a representative within the University other than the regular Association secretaries.

Both branches of the Lutheran church in Philadelphia have appointed a joint co-operative committee which has been working with the Association in taking care of the Lutheran students. The bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church has accepted its suggestion and appointed the minister of the nearest Methodist church to its staff of secretaries. The Protestant Episcopal church, through the bishop, has been co-operating most heartily for several years. Last spring there was held under the auspices of the Christian Association a conference of Episcopal students of the Middle Atlantic states. The Association has been able to serve the Roman Catholic church through the archbishop and the local parish priest. It has also been able to co-operate with the Young Men's Hebrew Association in caring for the Hebrew students. In this way the Association has come into relation with most of the religious bodies represented in the student body.

In these days of "social service" the Association very naturally places a great deal of emphasis on the Social Service Department of the work. The University Settlement of Philadelphia is owned and conducted by the Christian Association and maintains all of the activities of a modern social settlement, including kindergarten, industrial classes, boys', girls', men's, and mothers' clubs, library, dramatics, indoor and outdoor athletics, lectures, entertainments, religious meetings, neighborhood improvement, dispensary, savings bank, children's playground, training conferences for social workers, and a special farm for camping during the summer season. There



are ten residents and about one hundred and fifty volunteer workers each year. The Social Service Department also includes special lectures in the different departments of the university, group discussions of social work led by the social experts of Philadelphia, and periodical dinners within the university, where addresses are made on the general subject of the Relationship of University Trained Men to Social Service. A very interesting phase of this work is that of the actual service done by the students under the auspices of the various religious, social, and philanthropic societies of Philadelphia. Last year something over sixty students were engaged in teaching foreigners, acting as "Boy Scouts," directing the moral training in public schools, assisting the social service department of the University Hospital, teaching Sunday-school classes, and visiting the various preparatory schools in this vicinity. This Social Service Department has the double objective of giving expression to the religious spirit and discovering for many men the need of the religious motive in their personal lives if they are to be successful in social work. Under the general head of Social Service within the university community should also be mentioned the Student Employment Bureau, which in its own way furnishes financial assistance to more than one hundred students each year, and the Student Loan Library, which provides textbooks for students who are unable to secure them for themselves.

Another main department of the work is that usually classified under the head of Foreign Missions. In promoting this work the devotional element is called for in prayer, the study element in the mission classes, while the ultimate object is actually to place men in service throughout the world. Pennsylvania has at the present time about forty alumni working as missionaries in foreign countries. The Student Volunteer Band and the Missionary Secretary are constantly at work securing new "volunteers."

But the unique work which Pennsylvania is doing in the foreign field is in the Medical School, Hospital, and Dispensary which are being established at Canton, China. Four medical graduates of the university, together with other members of the staff, are working with the Canton Christian College and the missionary societies of South China, in building up a Christian Medical School. This

particular undertaking has stimulated an interest in foreign missions throughout the entire university community. In connection with this foreign work, a special effort is being made to influence the two hundred foreign students who are at present in the university. Social gatherings, lectures, and discussions are provided in order to bring these foreigners into friendly and intimate relations with North American customs and Christian civilization.

This complex work, conducted under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association, requires an annual budget of \$35,000, and is heartily supported by the students, faculty, and alumni of the university. The staff of six secretaries is made up of mature men thoroughly trained for the different departments of the work. This unified, spontaneous religious organization seems to be meeting the needs of the university, as is indicated in the fact that there are no other religious organizations within the university community. The intercollegiate and world-wide affiliations bring to the organization a wealth of experience and a source of inspiration which is constantly felt.

If the day shall arrive when the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ that "they all may be one" shall be realized in a united Christian church, the student Young Men's Christian Association can rejoice in being once more absorbed in the original church which it is striving to serve and from which it derives its inspiration and support.

## SOME IMPLICATIONS OF PAULINISM

---

ERNEST D. BURTON

University of Chicago

---

Paul was not a theologian of the closet. Before his conversion to Christianity he had been a zealous promoter of the Jewish religion as he understood it. The experience that made him a follower of Jesus was a profound one, radically modifying his thought and life in important ways, and powerfully affecting his character. But it did not change him in this respect of which we are now speaking, except to intensify characteristics that were already present. As a Christian he was still not primarily a theologian, but a missionary. Theology was a by-product of the laboratory of personal experience and missionary work. In his effort to win men to faith in Jesus the Christ and to build up churches of believers, he was frequently called upon to deal with questions of profound interest and of far-reaching consequence. These questions had to do with theological thought or with the practical side of the religious life. Once raised, he dealt with them courageously, profoundly, and with far-seeing vision. Yet it may fairly be doubted whether, in the midst of his strenuous life, he always saw just how far the positions which he was led to adopt would carry him if they were followed to the full length of their logical consequences. Now and then he surprises us by the boldness with which he accepts the consequences of his premises, and not infrequently commands our admiration by the splendid sweep of his thinking. Sometimes the implications of his thought, though unexpressed, lie so obviously in his affirmations that it is impossible to doubt that they were in his mind. But in other cases the less obvious character of the implication and the existence of affirmations of a different character make one hesitate to affirm that he saw all that seems to us to be involved in what he clearly said.

It becomes necessary, therefore, in our interpretation of Paulinism to distinguish on the one hand the things that Paul says or that are so clearly involved as premise or consequence of what he has said that it is necessary to suppose that he held them as elements of his conscious thinking, and on the other hand those things which, though they are to us the necessary consequences or implication of what he expressly says, may not have been so regarded by him.

Progress of thought is in no small measure achieved precisely by the process of unfolding the implications of propositions accepted without perceiving these implications. It is so in individual life, and in the intellectual life of the race. One accepts today a certain doctrine or view of life, and stops there. A year later, ten years later, he perceives that this necessarily involves another doctrine or view of life, and marvels that he did not see it when he first accepted the doctrine in which it was wrapped up. A generation fights its intellectual battle, with stress and strain and conflict formulates its conclusions, and drives down a new stake on the frontier of its thought. It is a notable victory. And then men settle back for a period of rest. It is another generation with fresh access of vigor and courage that finds wrapped up in this new doctrine, now grown old, implications that the originators of it never saw and possibly would have vigorously denied.

This process makes for progress in two ways. Sometimes the new doctrine, which though implicated in the old one, was at first unseen, becoming explicit, is accepted, and the world is by so much richer. Sometimes the implication is seen to be impracticable of acceptance, and because of this the original dogma is re-examined and at length modified, and progress is made not so much by addition as by correction.

The purpose of this paper is, against the background of certain propositions clearly held and affirmed by Paul, to set forth certain implications of Paulinism which we cannot affirm that Paul himself held, but which seem to be necessarily involved in what he held and said, and to raise the question whether we ought to accept these and add them to our stock of ideas, or, because of their manifold erroneousness, turn back and correct the Pauline teachings in which they are implied. We begin with:

I. ELEMENTS OF THE APOSTOLIC THINKING CLEARLY AFFIRMED  
BY HIM

1. The central elements of the Old Testament religion, faith toward God and love to one's neighbor, are permanent elements of true religion, and as such vital elements of the Christian religion. They are the core of the Old Testament law, and because of that fact and in that sense the law is of permanent validity and authority. "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

2. The law, however, is, even when thus defined, not so much an obligation imposed from without as the definition of an ideal to be realized by the operation of a force working from within. That force is the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, the Christ within the soul. "Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. . . . If ye are led by the Spirit ye are not under law."

3. More specifically, the observance of the Sabbath and the other festival and fast days of the Jewish religious calendar is not obligatory for non-Jewish Christians. The practice is indeed dangerous on their part, being calculated to cultivate a legalistic type of thought and feeling and to obscure the supreme value of faith and love. "Ye observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid of you lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain."

4. A Gentile may become a Christian in the fullest sense of the word without coming in through the door of Jewish proselytism. He is under no obligation to be circumcised, nor is this necessary in order to share to the full in the salvation that is through Christ. Indeed for such a one to receive circumcision is equivalent to a repudiation of Christ and his gospel, and involves the danger of losing all the blessing and benefit that the gospel brings. "If ye receive circumcision Christ shall profit you nothing." This is not, of course, because of any inherently harmful effect of circumcision—"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision"—but because its acceptance under the conditions then existing involved the adoption of that legalistic type of religion,

the futility and utterly disappointing character of which Paul had already fully proved by experience and confirmed by much observation.

5. The Jewish Christian is at liberty to continue the observance of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion so long as he does so under circumstances which do not constitute such observance an attempt to impose them upon the Gentile. But when the observance of them on the part of the Jewish Christian involves the demand that the gentile Christian shall also adopt them, the Jewish Christian himself not only may but must cease to observe them. The apostle could tolerate any honest belief and practice except intolerance and coercion. This attitude on his part is clearly exhibited in his treatment of Peter at Antioch. He insisted strenuously that if Peter came to Antioch and mingled with the members of the Judeo-gentile Christian church, then he must not by word or by his own example put pressure upon the Gentiles to compel them to keep the law.

These several propositions of the apostle's teaching may be summed up as follows: A clear distinction must be made between the ethical and religious principles of the Old Testament religion and its statutes or specific instructions. The former are of permanent validity. The latter are not as such binding on any enlightened conscience. In so far as one obeys them he should do so not because of any authority in the statute, but because the permanent principles of religion and the spirit of God in the soul require the same things which the statute demands. A naturalized citizen may in some instances act in accordance with the laws of the country whose allegiance he has forsworn; but he does not do so because the law of that country enjoins such action. So the Christian may and should abstain from certain things forbidden by Old Testament statutes, but not because these statutes forbid them. Morality, whether for Jew or Gentile, is to be achieved not by obedience to statutes, but by the apprehension of principles and their application to existing problems and situations, and even more by following the impelling and guiding impulse of the indwelling Spirit of God. The attempt to subject the moral life to statutes is foolish, because it diverts the soul from those influences by which

higher character can be most effectively and surely produced, and the attempt to enforce them upon the consciences of others is tyranny, forbidden by the spirit of Jesus.

So far, then, the unmistakable teaching of the apostle. From these we may pass to consider some of the things which seem to be clearly implied in the apostle's teaching, but which are not expressly stated by him, and were not perhaps in all cases perceived or accepted by him. We may begin with the more obvious implications of his language, between which and the propositions already enumerated there is no very broad line of distinction. In the nature of the case it is impossible in general to quote words of the apostle in evidence that he held these views, since, by definition, these views were not expressed, perhaps not even consciously held by him, but were only implicit in what he held and expressed.

## II. IMPLICATIONS OF THE APOSTLE'S EXPRESSED THOUGHT

1. *No part* of the Old Testament has, *as such*, authority over the Christian conscience. The affirmation that the principles of the Old Testament religion are of permanent validity, but that statutes which are there expressly affirmed to be permanently valid are not in fact so, and indeed must no longer be obeyed, involves an attitude of discrimination and an exercise of critical moral judgment which implies that the evidence of authority is found somewhere else than in the fact that the principle or statute is found in the Old Testament. In other words, the principles which are accepted as permanently valid are so accepted, not because of their presence in the Old Testament or because they are there affirmed to be permanently valid. For on either ground it would be equally necessary to affirm the permanent validity of the very statutes whose validity Paul expressly denies.

2. Spiritual needs take precedence over physical rites. The religion of Christ, true religion, is essentially spiritual. It demands physical expression, but no physical rite is essential to it. Circumcision, though affirmed in the Old Testament to be of perpetual validity and a necessary condition of membership in the community of God's people, is not so in fact, and must cease when it comes to be an obstacle to a purely spiritual faith, or an occasion of dividing

the Church of Christ. Logically, the same principle must apply to all physical rites. Better no ceremonies or altogether new ones than an ancient rite to which is ascribed regenerating power, or which by dividing the Christian forces imperils the progress of Christianity. Those who find in ceremonies help to their spiritual life may and should observe them, but not in such a way as to teach their essentialness, to exercise constraint on others of a different conscience, or to divide and consequently weaken the Christian forces.

It is possible that Paul himself would not have accepted what we are saying. But it still remains that his reasoning concerning circumcision would apply to all physical rites whose value for us is in their symbolism, not in any inherent power to produce a spiritual change.

3. There must be a large measure of tolerance in the Christian church. We might perhaps have placed this proposition in the preceding list, so clearly does Paul hold it. Vigorously opposing legalism, he yet devoted much energy and time to keeping legalists and non-legalists together in the Christian church and in harmonious relations one with another. Not all the followers of Christ can move with equal rapidity, or find the largest measure of help in exactly the same form of organization or of worship. Neither those who cling to old views and institutions nor those who find a larger measure of truth in new views or helpfulness in new forms and institutions have the right to dictate to the other party their beliefs or their conduct. Yet toleration is not an end in itself. Progress toward truth and the development of human character, the improvement of human life, are the ends for the attainment of which toleration is a helpful means. If ritualism and the legalism which Paul so passionately rejected furnish to any group of people a better expression of truth and a better aid to the spiritual life than simpler forms of worship and freer conceptions of religion and ethics, it is not for those who hold the latter views to denounce or disfellowship those who hold the former. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth anything, but faith working through love." The sentence which the apostle uttered in passionate opposition to the attempt of the legalists to force their



legalism upon the non-legalists, equally forbids the non-legalist to adopt an intolerant attitude toward the legalist.

4. The supreme attestation of religious authority lies not in a book, nor in a church, but in the growing experience of religious men. It was in his own experience and in his observation of the experience of others that the apostle found warrant for setting aside the theology of current orthodoxy, and not only statutes which the ancient Scriptures affirmed to be of perpetual validity, but the whole principle of statutory religion. How far he was willing to grant to others the right which he himself exercised is not perhaps wholly clear; but the principle implicit in his conduct is that to men of experience and insight in each generation belongs the task of discriminating among the utterances of the prophets and sages of the past and present, and of accepting and teaching the things which, whether old or new, verify themselves in the laboratory of experience. No utterance, however confidently put forth as a word of God or affirmed to be of perpetual validity, is final in the sense that none who come after may contest it, if, tried in the crucible of experience, it fails to stand the test; no rite or ceremony can claim continued observance when it has become an obstacle to spiritual progress or has ceased to be religiously valuable. The principle of leadership must indeed be recognized both as respects men of the past and of the present. The teachings of the great thinkers and prophets of the past must always be held in respect and set aside only for adequate cause clearly shown. The process of sifting and judging the old, as well as of bringing forth the new, must always belong primarily to the men of insight, experience, and deep religious life. But the fact of leadership and the relation of leaders and followers can never wholly destroy personal responsibility. Even the humblest man must decide at least whose leadership he will follow, and the tribunal that judges authorities is in the last analysis set up in the human soul. The whole principle of authority-theology is in conflict with the implications of Paulinism. Nor priest, nor prophet, nor book can wholly relieve each new generation, or even each human soul, of the responsibility of recognizing for itself the voice of truth and God.

5. The supreme need of the church in its search for truth and knowledge of duty is therefore not an authoritative creed or even an authoritative book, but a deep and ever-renewed and deepening spiritual life. The creed serves a useful purpose in giving clear definition to hazy thought, and perhaps in interposing a pause in otherwise too strenuous controversy. The books in which are recorded the experiences of the great and good of the past are of incalculable value, and should always not only be held in reverence, but diligently studied. Supremely valuable are the books of the Bible in which is preserved the record of the development of the highest and purest of all religions, and of the life and teachings of prophets and apostles and the Son of God. But no book, not even the books of the Bible, can take the place of the contemporary spiritual life. The supreme value of Jesus to the world is not in the books that were written about him, but the life that he lived and the stream of spiritual life which has flowed unbroken from him down to the present hour. "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." Without such life the books themselves would be valueless. Where such life is, the books will be of immeasurable value in stimulating and developing it, and most effective when it is clearly perceived that, save in their disclosure of the supreme personality of Jesus, they exist not to define the goal beyond which no progress can proceed, but rather to stimulate and inspire those who are endeavoring on the foundation of the apostles and prophets to build higher and better things than they attained.

6. The fundamental ideal of Christianity is not static perfection but continual progress. It is of the very nature of the Christian religion that it is always in a process of evolution, and in this fact there lies the constant possibility, if not the certainty, that old elements will be left behind and new elements taken on. Change is not something foreign to the Christian religion; it is natural to it. It never seeks to break with the past, it never consents to be bound by it. It emerged from the Judaism of the first century, not by returning to any previous golden age, but by a forward step that left both past and present behind. It found its inspiration in no small measure in the best elements of ancient prophetism, but

its watchword was Forward, not Backward. If the men of the present day are to emulate the spirit of that age, they will return to the first age of the church to find the explanation of that marvelous forward step that was taken then, and to gather inspiration and instruction for their own problems. But we shall not expect to find either in Paulinism or in the early church a *ne plus ultra*, a standard by which to control our own thinking or to bind our own action. And if, indeed, we do approach the matter with the thought that here we shall find the essential and permanent elements of our religion, which must determine the course of the church for all time, then we shall discover that the ideal which was stamped upon Christianity at the beginning was not, "Back to the beginning," but, "Forward, ever forward to the truest and best." And if we seek to follow what is deepest and most characteristic of that age we shall, forgetting the things that are behind, press on to the highest possible.

In conclusion let one or two questions be raised respecting the practical applications of implicit Paulinism. And since Paul was a missionary let these questions pertain to the field of our foreign missionary work. If he were facing our missionary problems today, what would Paul do; if we are good Paulinists and follow out his principles to their legitimate conclusion what must we do in respect to ecclesiastical rites and ecclesiastical organization?

Must we be ready to surrender either any particular form of baptism, or even baptism in any form if we find that it has become an obstacle in the way of spiritual religion or a hindrance to the progress of Christianity? Must we not maintain that the apostle's insistence upon the essentially spiritual character of religion is far stronger than the affirmation of the necessity of any rite or ceremony whatever, and that the principle that the most ancient and authoritative usages and rites must be surrendered when it comes to pass that they militate against the progress of Christianity, is a principle applicable to baptism, and ought to be applied whenever baptism comes to occupy in our world the position which circumcision held in Paul's day? The impulse toward the unification of the Christian forces in the great republic of China, for example, is a very strong one, and that such unification, if wisely effected, would make

powerfully for the progress of Christianity at the most critical period in her history, it is scarcely possible to doubt. Among the most serious obstacles to such unification are the conflicting doctrines and practices in respect to baptism prevalent among different bodies of Christians working in the country. May it not be that the only way to escape the necessity of assuming toward baptism the attitude which Paul was constrained to take toward circumcision and the eating of "unclean" meats is in a cordial spirit of mutual tolerance of one another's differing practices? It may be well if in view of this possibility we all turn back to make a fresh study of the New Testament.

Ought each denomination to stand ready to modify its form of church organization if it becomes evident that another form would be more conducive to the progress of the Christian religion, or, perhaps retaining its own form, be prepared to incorporate its own organization in a larger Christian body which shall include all the followers of Christ in any land, if it is apparent that by such means the gospel of Jesus will more rapidly and effectively permeate and control the life of the nation?

Finally: Shall we be prepared definitely and of intention to present to non-Christian peoples a simplified Christian message, which, eliminating all that is peripheral, local, or accidental, shall put all emphasis on the central and vital elements of our religion, and shall leave it to the nations to whom we bring the gospel to develop their own special type of religious life, theology, and ecclesiastical organization?

## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

---

### A PROFESSIONAL READING COURSE ON THE APOSTOLIC AGE

*The moral and social conditions in the earliest Christian communities of Palestine and of the Mediterranean world are of great interest. How completely did the first Christians make the ideal of Jesus and of Paul their own? How thoroughly did they accomplish this ideal in their everyday lives? Particularly as regards the gentile Christians, were they able to rise well above the pagan morality to which they had been accustomed and by which they were still surrounded? We could not expect that the first Christians would reach moral and social perfection, but we do find them striving earnestly to attain to the high gospel standard of purity, righteousness, and brotherliness. Their shortcomings appear in the New Testament writings, but much more one may see there the wonderful success of Christianity in elevating the moral and social life of the members of its communities. The present inquiry seeks to bring out the main facts of this kind, in which we can see Christianity inaugurating a moral and social renovation.*

*This study of the Christian life in the apostolic age is conducted by PROFESSOR GEORGE HOLLEY GILBERT. Questions concerning it may be addressed to the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.*

---

#### III. CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE

The question which we are to consider this month is whether early Christianity displayed a moral power that was commensurate with its ideal. Did it make bad men good and good men better? Interest is centered not on the teaching but rather on the practice of morals. In this study we shall use von Dobschütz's "Christian Life in the Primitive Church" as our special guide.

It is admitted that our sources are very fragmentary, noticeably so in regard to statistics of all sorts, but it is held at the same time that they yield to a competent interpreter a picture of the actual life of the early church which is more satisfactory than would at first appear possible.

The author, without explanation or justification of his course, begins his treatise with the Pauline churches. We are introduced at once to

the life of believers in Corinth, and the preceding twenty years of Christian history are for the time ignored. Not until Book II do we come to consider the beginning of the Christian movement. This inversion of the historical sequence tends to give undue emphasis to the originality and importance of Paul.

The churches of Paul are treated in four groups, viz., Corinth, the churches of Macedonia, the churches of Asia Minor, and the church at Rome. Christian life in Corinth naturally receives much the fullest treatment as our sources of information are here most detailed. It should not be overlooked by the student in forming his conception of life in the apostolic age as a whole that this church of which we have the most complete picture was more crude and defective than, for instance, the church at Philippi.

One may doubt whether it is justifiable to speak of the church in Corinth as "great" in size, and may consider it unwarrantable to speak of it as having "outlying branches in other places of the province of Achaia." Paul indeed addressed our second Corinthian letter to the "church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia." But at a time when the Christians of Corinth had no ecclesiastical organization among themselves we obviously cannot regard the Christians in other parts of the province as "branches" of the Corinthian church. This point, however, is quite incidental.

When we come to things essential, we are told that the disciples were bound together and marked off from the world by two facts, viz., confession of the name of Jesus and possession of the Spirit of God. Possession of the Spirit was manifest particularly in the devotional meetings. Significant for the ethical value of these meetings is the fact that all the members of the church participated in them on a common level. This is quite true, but we may add that the confusion resulting from the unlimited freedom and spontaneity of the meetings also had ethical significance. It both disclosed and fostered a tendency to intellectual pride and disregard for other worshipers.

The author points out that the Christians of Corinth showed a want of "moral grasp" in supposing that the more unnatural and unintelligible the manifestation of the Spirit was, by so much was it more divine and more to be sought. A similar lack of moral insight was shown by their view of baptism, according to which it had an external and miraculous efficacy. The Lord's Supper, on the contrary, was not regarded as a sacrament, says von Dobschütz, but was treated as a common festive meal. This, however, was not Paul's own view of the Supper.

The Christian attitude toward marriage was a subject of intense interest in Corinth, and Paul's handling of the various questions involved was marked by great practical sense. A Christian who is joined to heathen is not to fear pollution. Christianity will sanctify the relation and determine the religious status of the children. But if the heathen partner will not continue in wedded life with a Christian, then the Christian is free. The indissolubleness of the marriage bond is here set aside. The Christian, however, instead of forcing a separation is to win the heathen partner if possible. So much in regard to mixed marriages. Whether Christianity "demands" that a Christian man marry only a Christian is a question that is hardly disposed of by the word of Paul in I Cor. 7:39.

Another living question in Corinth, and elsewhere too, was how the converted slave should regard his lot. It is well said that the moral strength of the new religion revealed itself in the fact that it made faithful, obedient, and conscientious slaves. It is thought that Paul dissuaded from ransom, where ransom was possible, because he did not wish to have the church burdened for the support of emancipated slaves, and also because he regarded the existing social relations as divinely appointed. Slavery lost much of its power, it is thought, by the equality of the slave in the church, and by his unrestricted share in the future salvation. The Christian master was not expected to free his Christian slaves, but he must regard them as brethren in the Lord. Thus, while the outward relationship remained, it was inwardly transformed.

In the discussion of woman's participation in public meetings one point in our author's position may be especially noted, viz., his harmonizing of I Cor. 11:5 with 14:34. It is thought that Paul had at first allowed women to take part in public prayer and prophecy and that later, because of disorders, he forbade it entirely. Is it, however, certain that I Cor. 14:34a is to be taken absolutely, and is it probable that Paul would contradict himself in an important matter of public conduct within the compass of a few chapters?

The case of incest in Corinth is treated very fully and the solution of the problems involved is worthy of careful consideration. We will not enter here into this exposition, but will simply note the bearing of the incident upon the moral state of the Corinthian church. It is not the fact that a case of gross sin had occurred in the church which is especially significant, but the fact that the church *defended* it. Von Dobschütz holds that the opposition of the church to the apostle was not due to its love of immorality but rather to its jealous regard for the

principle of freedom. Had their defense of the offender been due to an inward approval of his deed, then surely Paul would have laid bare this ground and would have broken off his connection with them. It is rather to be held that their attitude toward the apostle was determined by an extreme and unbalanced adherence to a principle which he had preached to them, viz., "All things are lawful." This view is obviously in accord with all that we know of the Corinthians' exaltation of knowledge. It does not free the church from the charge of immaturity in moral judgment or from the charge that it was lacking in regard for the man who had brought to it the knowledge of Christ, but it does free it from the charge that it approved of gross immorality.

That there was a considerable lack of Christian generosity in the Corinthian church is inferred from the apparent difficulty which Paul had in raising a fit contribution for the poor in Jerusalem and also from the utterly selfish manner in which, at the common meal, the poor members of their own fellowship were neglected.

The contrast between "strong" and "weak" is held to have been fundamental not only in Corinth but in all the church of the apostolic age. These two classes may be regarded, in some measure, as representing the two fundamental qualities of liberty and sanctity. The "strong" emphasized liberty without due consideration for other qualities, and the "weak" laid similar emphasis on the importance of sanctity. To the "weak" is conceded greater moral *earnestness*, to the "strong" greater moral *power*. But the earnestness was hampered by timidity, and the power was easily led into self-indulgence.

The immaturity of the Corinthian church is seen again in the party spirit which was early developed. This is ascribed, without proof, to the character of the preaching of Apollos, while at the same time it is thought to have been congenial to the Greek of that day. The rank growth of party spirit in Corinth shows a deep lack of church consciousness or even of Christian consciousness.

In treating the churches of Macedonia the author seeks to show a contrast between Thessalonica and Philippi in regard to maturity of character. The letters to the Thessalonians were written soon after the formation of the church, while that to the Philippians followed a decade of Christian growth among its leaders. Yet the Thessalonian Christians, in contrast to those of Corinth, are said to have had a remarkable church consciousness and to have abounded in brotherly love. The particular evidence of immaturity in Thessalonica was the strained anticipation of the Lord's coming. This is supposed to have been pro-



moted by the poverty of the Thessalonian Christians which bred dissatisfaction with their social condition. The preaching of Paul was, however, the starting-point of the strong current feeling on the subject of the Parousia. One wonders whether Paul emphasized this doctrine more in Thessalonica than he had previously done in Philippi or than he did later in Corinth, and if so, what led him to do it. It may be that the unhealthy development in Thessalonica was due mainly to local conditions.

The relative maturity of the Philippian church is apparent in the lack of exhortation in the letter to them and in the pervading spirit of confidence in their judgment and devotion. It is manifest also in the consciousness of unity that pervaded the church, a fact that may well have been due to the organization which the church had created for its needs.

When we come to the churches of Galatia and the Phrygian church at Colossae, our sources do not reflect the actual state of morality in these communities, at any rate to any considerable degree. A general condition of prosperity is implied. There is no trace of such immorality as was to be found in the Corinthian church, if we except the evil of discord. The trouble in the churches of Galatia was doctrinal, a fall from the freedom of the gospel to the sub-Christian level of Judaism. Doctrinal also was the defect in Colossae, though not wholly the same as in the churches of Galatia. Though blended with Old Testament elements, it bears the stamp of the dualistic nature-worship long at home in these regions.

Our author counts Rome among the Pauline churches, but uses the Epistle to the Romans only as in a limited degree making us acquainted with the moral state of the Roman church. The question which is discussed with most show of acquaintance with specific Roman circumstances is that of the "strong" and the "weak," but this is doctrinal.

We must turn now to Jewish Christendom. Here we have to do with people who had long lived under the civilizing influences of a divine law. Hence Christian morality has here a more precise stamp upon it. The early Christian community—a family rather than a church—consisted of pious Jews whose attitude toward Jesus increased rather than lessened their loyalty to the Jewish law. But when they began to meet by themselves, new customs were developed. Community of goods, however, was not one of these new customs, according to von Dobschütz, though he allows that it is found in Acts. He thinks that Luke was strongly inclined to communism and consequently put

it into his more or less ideal picture of the first days. However, if there was not community of goods in the ordinary sense of that phrase, brotherly love was unlimited, and as each one shared with any in need there was virtual communism.

Yet this earliest Christian community was not ideal, and it is plain that the author of Acts, who gives the incident of Ananias and relates how discord arose over the daily ministration of charity, did not aim to wipe out all shadows. It is possible and quite conceivable that a Christian writer might unconsciously soften the hard lines of the early Christian life which he was describing, but that is a different thing from a clear purpose on his part to produce a picture of purely ideal relationships. We are without proof that Luke entertained such a purpose.

The Judaism of the Jerusalem church is strongly stated by our author, we venture to think too strongly. This appears, for example, in what he says of James and the Apostolic Decree. On the basis of Acts 21:25 the decree is regarded as issued by James long after Paul had left the Syro-Cilician field. The decree is said to reveal the true Jewish contempt for the heathen in that it presupposes among the Jews that morality which it enjoins on the Gentiles. Its Pharisaism is seen in its combination of ceremonial requirements with morality. The author's portrait of James is taken from Hegesippus rather than from Acts and Paul.

In describing the Judaistic propaganda von Dobschütz does not remind the reader with sufficient clearness that this propaganda was carried on only by a section of the Jerusalem church, and that section not the dominant one. It never included the leaders of the church. The recognition of this fact is necessary if justice is to be done to the Jerusalem church as a whole.

We turn again to Asia Minor, to churches which are under the Pauline influence as their state may be inferred from the Epistle to the Ephesians (written by someone who was dominated by Paul's spirit) and from I Peter (written after Peter's death). In two particulars an advance on Paul is found in these writings. First, the Christian morality is more strongly supported from the Old Testament, and second, this moral teaching, as based on Jesus, appeals to his earthly life more than Paul does. With the growth of a more definite ideal of the church in Asia Minor, at the time when these letters were written there were manifest two moral defects, viz., a tendency to shun the burden and danger of office, or, if accepting office, to exploit it for the sake of personal aggrandizement, and a tendency to heretical views. These are only

touched in vague general terms, but are thought to be the same that are met later in the Johannine writings.

For the Christianity of Rome in the later part of the apostolic age our author uses the Epistle to the Hebrews as the chief source of information. This is thought to have been addressed to some one of the "house-churches" in Rome and not to the entire Christian community. The moral condition of the readers was due to the persecution to which they had been subjected. By this they had been led to withdraw into themselves, and had also been led to seek in ceremonialism for a means of atonement. The suffering which they had endured had wrought in them a sense of guilt according to a widespread view of suffering in ancient times.

Whatever one may think of this interpretation of the Epistle, it must of course be admitted that we have no forcible evidence in support of the view that the readers contemplated by the author of Hebrews were Christians of Rome.

For the Christianity of the Asia Minor churches toward the close of the first century the Johannine writings, attributed to the "presbyter" John who dominated these churches, are our source of information. This man exercised his sway through itinerant preachers and through his letters. Opposition to him was not lacking, as the case of Diotrephes shows; and if this opposition was inspired by a desire for self-government, there was something to be said for it. By the side of this opposition to the presbyter's ecclesiastical authority there was false teaching by men who had "gone out" from the school of John. This false teaching consisted in a perversion of the presbyter's words, as, for example, in a literal interpretation of the saying that "whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not."

The value of the seven letters of the Apocalypse for the purpose in hand is fully recognized by the author. They show that there was much to be blamed in the churches addressed, more to be praised. A strong tendency to asceticism is inferred from Rev. 14:3-4.

The Gospel of John, like the Apocalypse, is severe in its judgment on the Jewish people. It even represents Jesus as filled with the same spirit. But the ideal which it sets up for the Christian life is eminently simple and practical. It is to keep the word of Christ, to do God's will, to bear fruit in a love that is ready to make the last sacrifice. Thus the Fourth Gospel is regarded as reflecting the views and condition of the church at the close of the first century.

## The American Institute of Sacred Literature

### SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS OF BIBLE CLUBS USING THE OUTLINE COURSES

*Every month from October to June there will be presented in this department of the BIBLICAL WORLD suggestions to leaders of Bible Classes, desiring to use as a basis for class work either the outline Bible-study course on "THE LIFE OF CHRIST" prepared by ERNEST D. BURTON, or that on "THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST" by WILLIAM R. HARPER. Suggestions are prepared by GEORGIA LOUISE CHAMBERLIN, Secretary of the Reading and Library Department of the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, who will be glad to consider any questions which club leaders may choose to address to the INSTITUTE.*

#### THE LIFE OF CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

Three very important phases of the life of Jesus are presented in the work for this month. First we see the organization of a body of men through whom his work may in time become institutionalized and permanent. The importance of this task can only be judged in the light of the study of the second great theme, the Sermon on the Mount, in which we study the ideals of Jesus for establishing a new order, which he designates "the kingdom of God." An excellent analysis of the Sermon on the Mount is found in Burton and Mathews' constructive studies in the *Life of Christ*. The contents of the Sermon, which are bewildering in the multiplicity of topics when considered by young students, may be very clearly divided into groups and reduced to general principles through the analysis contained in this book, or in other authorities equally good. Third, the pronounced break with the Pharisees, and the inevitable result of the increased emphasis upon the distinctive and antagonistic views of Jesus, demand large emphasis before the class, and bring it to an interesting study of Jesus' method of teaching through parables.

#### Program I

*Leader:* (1) A politico-geographical study of Palestine, and a discussion of the widespread fame of Jesus, at the opening of the second

<sup>1</sup> The textbook for this course is *The Life of Christ*, by Ernest D. Burton; 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

period of the Galilean ministry. (2) The serious character of the task of Jesus in choosing apostles.

*Members of the class:* (1) The names, office, immediate and future work, and personal characteristics of the twelve apostles. (Material to be gathered from the entire New Testament.) (2) The standards of righteousness which must mark the members of the kingdom of God, as defined in the Sermon on the Mount, (a) in respect to murder and adultery, (b) divorce, (c) oaths, (d) retaliation, (e) love of others, (f) almsgiving, (g) prayer, (h) fasting. (3) The doctrine and practice of the Pharisees concerning all these things. (4) The raising of the widow's son; a comparison of the motives of this miracle with that of other miracles of healing which have been studied.

*Subject for discussion:* To what extent does the Golden Rule furnish a basis for action under each of the modern aspects of the items of topic 2?

### Program II

*Leader:* The variety of methods adopted by Jesus in his teaching and some reasons for them.

*Members of the class:* (1) The social life of Jesus among the people. (2) Jesus' attitude toward the Pharisees. (3) The reading of parables concerning the kingdom of God (Section 57). (4) An Old Testament parable (II Sam. 22:1-15) compared with the parables of Jesus.

*Subject for discussion:* Does the observation of life about us indicate that the kingdom of God as conceived by Jesus is nearer us today than in his own times? If so, in what respects?

### REFERENCE READING

Burton and Mathews, *Life of Christ*, chaps. xi, xii, xiii; Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, chaps. xvii-xxiii; Edersheim, *In the Days of Jesus*, chaps. xiii, xiv; Stalker, *The Life of Christ*, chap. v; Rhees, *The Life of Jesus*, chap. iii; Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus*, chap. x; Dawson, *The Life of Christ*, chaps. x-xii; Gilbert, *The Student's Life of Jesus*, pp. 134-43; Farrar, *The Life of Christ*, pp. 307-28.

Articles in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, four-volume and one-volume editions, and also in his *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, should be freely consulted.

### THE FORESHADOWINGS OF THE CHRIST<sup>1</sup>

With the study of this month we take up that development of the Old Testament literature which contains the essence of the Hebrew

<sup>1</sup> The textbook for this course is *The Foreshadowings of the Christ*, by William Rainey Harper; 50 cents, plus 4 cents postage. Address the AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

religion.<sup>2</sup> It is necessary to get before the class at this time a clearer notion than they have yet received of the real nature of the prophet.

Every prophet, because of his moral character, which differentiated him from the mass of the people, because of his spiritual insight, which made him keenly alive to the ethical messages of Jehovah, because of his intellectual acumen, which enabled him to read the signs of his times, and because of his faith in his mission, which gave him courage to speak his mind at all cost, dealt with three conditions. These were: first, the interpretation of past history as he saw it in the light of his conception of the character of God; second, the crisis, then present which appeared to him as the result of the past, and the key to the future, and related itself directly to the activity of Jehovah; and third, the future glory or disaster, which seemed to him inevitable, because of his higher conception of the character of God.

The farther back we go in the history of prophecy, the more of the traditional and perhaps fantastic element we find in the stories which have gathered around the names of the prophets; but back of all this external matter we may see the essential man with his inspiration and his mission. To bring this man with his message to his own times, and with his vision of eternal truth, to the appreciation of the class the energy of the leader should be bent.

<sup>2</sup> The designation "historical method of Bible study" carries with it the assumption that in the study of a biblical book or character, all the facts which can be secured, or the suppositions which can be well based, are brought to bear upon the literature under consideration. At any moment new facts may be discovered which will modify previous conclusions, and theories may be advanced which seem to fit the circumstances better than those which have been held previously. The lapse of fifteen years, therefore, is sure to find new positions on many questions, and to present a clearer and more impressive view of a character or teaching.

A striking example of this change of position is found in the discussion of two books included in the work of the present month. The books of Jonah and of Joel are discussed in this course in the historical period of King Jeroboam II, that is, among the very early prophets. The pressure of an increased tendency to consider the theology of the prophets in placing them historically has, in the fifteen years since this course was published, compelled students to recognize the fact that neither of these books could easily have been the product of this early period, that Jonah presents the fullest expression of the relation of the care of God for *all* the world, and that the spiritual blessing so highly extolled in Joel did not represent the ambitions of the prophets of this early period.

It will be best, therefore, for leaders of groups to modify the course by omitting the study of Joel and Jonah at this period, and introducing it at the latest period of the study of this subject. Students should be directed to omit the study of the work for the eighth to the seventeenth days inclusive at this time.

*Program I*

*Leader:* (1) The purpose and point of view of the prophet, and his attitude toward the past history of his people, the present crisis in which he lived, and the future destiny of the nation.

*Members of the class:* (1) Political conditions in Israel under Ahab. (2) The religious crisis under Ahab, and Elijah's contribution to the current conception of Jehovah. (3) Reading of the story of Elijah's test of Baal (I Kings 17:—19:4). (4) Elisha as a politician. (Disregard the wonder stories and seek for signs of political diplomacy.)

*Subject for discussion:* If we were to strip off from the biographies of Elijah and Elisha as recorded in the Old Testament, all of the miraculous element, should we still have pictures of men who saw God more fully than their predecessors, and were able to show him to the men of their day? Is such a process essential if we would truly appreciate these men?

*Program II*

*Leader:* Political and religious conditions in northern Israel under Jeroboam II.

*Members of the class:* (1) Facts about the man Amos which can be gathered from his book. (2) Extracts from the sermons of Amos which represent his attitude toward the social abuses of his day. (3) The ideals of Amos concerning worship. (4) Amos' conception of God's attitude toward sin and the sinner. (5) The life and message of Hosea.

*Subject for discussion:* Did the Hebrew people in this period feel the need of a savior from sin? If not, what was the ideal or the "fore-shadowing" in this period?

## REFERENCE READING

Harper, *The Prophetic Element in the Old Testament*, entire volume; Wade, *Old Testament History*, pp. 312-55; Kent, *History of the Hebrews*, Vol. II; Cornill, *History of Israel*, pp. 98-114; Cornill, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 27-55; Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets*, pp. 83-142; Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 47-190; Orelli, *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 224-44; George Adam Smith, *Book of the Twelve Prophets*, Vol. I, chaps. i-xxiii; Sanders and Kent, *Messages of the Prophets*, Vol. I, pp. 3-76; Chamberlin, *The Hebrew Prophets*, chaps. iii-viii.

Consult Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, four-volume and one-volume editions, for articles on Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Baal-worship, Samaria, Bethel, Ahab, Jeroboam II, and other names and events of the period. Kent's Chart of Hebrew History should become familiar to the class during this period.

## Book Reviews

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE TO FORMAL THEOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

Some three years ago Dr. Slattery was elected to the chair of ecclesiastical history in the General Theological Seminary in New York, but preferred to remain rector of Grace Church. The six lectures included in this volume were delivered in Lent of 1912 in the General Theological Seminary, upon the Paddock Foundation.

The provinces with which Dr. Slattery deals, by way of illustration and suggestion, are those of Biblical Criticism, the Church, Immortality, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and the Knowledge of God. In the field of biblical criticism we are assured, for example, that "the recognition of Christ's authoritative voice" in the Fourth Gospel, so pre-eminently won from the religious consciousness by the simple reading of that Gospel, can "scarcely fail to bring the Fourth Gospel very close to the traditional date and authorship"; again, we may judge from the analogy of a common experience "that in perhaps a single week St. Paul sent from his Roman prison the letters which we now have to the Colossians, the Ephesians, and Philemon," varying their style and content according to his sense of need and fitness. The center of interest in the lecture upon "The Church" lies in its handling of the problem of authority. The supreme authority is "the universal reason hearkening to God, i.e., the church." The witness of the church as a whole issues in the conviction that "in some organic and firmly knit manner God has revealed himself continuously and authoritatively to that collective humanity known as the Christian church." In relation to immortality, Dr. Slattery finds the wish to live a strong argument, declares the hope of immortality a strong moral force, expresses the conviction that while the body sleeps at death, the soul is alive as never before.

The lecture on "Jesus Christ" brings religious experience to the confirmation of confessional theology. If we pay close attention to the voice of religious experience, we shall no longer feel that "Christ was more truly in St. Mark than in St. John and St. Paul." Essential human nature is the same in the first as in the twentieth century; the alleged differences are overdrawn. The modern Christian insists upon

<sup>1</sup> *The Authority of Religious Experience*. By Charles Lewis Slattery, D.D. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. 299. \$1.80.



the reality of Jesus' temptations, and upon the limitation of his knowledge. Yet he never failed and never sinned. "Religious instinct, apart from scholarship, prefers to think that the apostles and evangelists were mistaken, rather than our Lord, when they make him *seem* to say that he would return in bodily form within a generation to rule his kingdom." As a matter of fact, Christ did come, and in a manner that John recognized, i.e., through the Holy Spirit; "and was in his kingdom, the church, ruling and guiding it." "The Parousia has come." Of the miracles, Dr. Slattery says, "Religious experience has the best of rights to stay the hands of critics when they form a theory and cut up the Gospels to fit it." "Religious experience has full cause to be sure that many of our Lord's deeds were beyond the comprehension of both his own day and ours."

The crux of the final lecture, which deals with God, is its Trinitarian apologetic. In brief, the argument is that of "a social Trinity." God made the world "to win a larger field for his love." We may not deny God the joy of growth from glory to glory. "It would not be strange if this (philosophic) conviction of pluralism joined with the instructive search for unity might some day soon bring philosophy to put forth a hypothesis which should be very near the essential meaning of the doctrine of the Trinity."

This brief survey gives no notion of the marked literary excellence of the book, of its aptness of illustration, of its frequent cogency of argument. But it may serve to indicate the chief results to which, in Dr. Slattery's judgment, the study of religious experience, as related to formal theology, may lead. These lectures reveal a broad general acquaintance with current modes of thought in the various fields of practical and formal theology. The author brings to bear illustrations from psychotherapy, pragmatism, pluralism, etc. And yet it becomes rather apparent that the bent of the apologetic is to make the confessional *status quo* acceptable to the modern mind.

HENRY B. ROBINS

PACIFIC COAST BAPTIST SEMINARY  
BERKELEY, CAL.

---

ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS<sup>1</sup>  
VOLUME IV ("Confirmation"—"Drama")

The standard of excellence laid down in the earlier volumes of this series is fully maintained in Vol. IV. Of the 166 writers who contributed

<sup>1</sup> *The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*. Edited by James Hastings. Vol. IV "Confirmation"—"Drama." Scribner, 1912. Pp. xvi-907.

to its 907 double-column pages, twenty-nine wrote on Semitic themes, and produced forty-seven articles. Like its predecessors, Vol. IV is to be commended for its long and exhaustive treatments of certain themes, composed of several articles prepared by specialists in their respective fields. Some of the most notable are, "Cosmogony and Cosmology" (pp. 125-79), composed of nineteen articles written by as many well-known specialists on the peculiar beliefs of as many different prominent nationalities; "Crimes and Punishments" (pp. 248-305), comprised of fifteen articles; "Death and Disposal of the Dead" (pp. 411-511), consisting of twenty articles by as many eminent scholars; "Demons and Spirits" (pp. 565-636), with twenty articles of notable character; "Disease and Medicine" (pp. 723-72), made up of eleven articles; "Divination" (pp. 775-830), comprising seventeen articles which discuss the prevalence of this phenomenon among different peoples. About one-quarter to one-third of these combination articles are Semitic. The writers of these and other Semitic articles are recognized as some of the leaders in Semitic research. Among them may be named on Assyro-Babylonian themes: A. H. Sayce, L. W. King, R. Campbell Thompson, T. G. Pinches, and S. H. Langdon; on Egyptian: W. M. F. Petrie, G. B. Foucart, F. Ll. Griffith, H. R. Hall; on Hebrew themes: W. H. Bennett, J. P. Peters, L. B. Paton, L. W. Batten, and Jas. Strachan; on Jewish matters: Ignaz Goldziher, M. Gaster, Joseph Morris, and H. Hirschfeld; on Muhammadan themes: Stanley Lane-Poole, D. S. Margoliouth, F. W. Juynboll, Gaudefroy-Demombynes, and C. Prüfer.

Such articles as present the archaeological results of research in the Semitic field are up to date and comprehensive in character. The researches of R. Campbell Thompson in the realm of demons and spirits as held by the Assyro-Babylonians are especially instructive. Those peoples were thoroughly convinced of the existence of disembodied spirits, and reduced them to exact classes and species. Besides these there were unhuman spirits which flitted about in innumerable hordes to threaten the safety of humans. And a third class was that of semi-human demons, which were a kind of goblins of semi-human parentage. The presence of such spirits gave rise to the production of innumerable ways and means of guarding human life. Foucart tells us that the character of demons and spirits in Egypt was in conformity to the general animistic character of the primitive religions of the Nile valley. In Egypt every object or being natural or manufactured had its demon or demons. But Egyptian demons were the same in the essentials of their nature and attributes as the most ancient gods (p. 587). The formulae

confuse them constantly. Such demons or spirits existed in groups, and became gods by "emergence" (p. 588). No ordinary mortal can ever become a god or even a demon. Gaudefroy-Demombynes in speaking of Islam recognizes three classes of living beings higher than man: (1) angels, (2) demons, and (3) *jinn*—all formed from one single substance, instead of from a combination of substances like the human body (p. 615).

The hundred-page article on "Death and the Disposal of the Dead" (pp. 411-511) is a *vade mecum* of the subject. Its twenty articles are full of the latest researches of ethnologists and archaeologists among all the chief peoples of the earth. Naturally the Egyptian customs occupy the chief place among the Semites. H. R. Hall has presented a full condensed treatment of the peculiar ideas of these people as revealed in their elaborate ceremonies and ritual. No other burial rites in the world have attracted so much attention. After the invention of the process of embalming, the chief peculiarity of their rites was the artificial preservation of the body of the deceased. Their views of the value of human life, and of the activities of the dead in the underworld are carefully set forth. Lane-Poole has also done good service in presenting the mysterious burial rites of the Muhammadans of the present day—unique and far-reaching in their influence on the lives of the Arabs.

The least satisfactory sets of articles touching the Semites are those which aim to present the religious and psychological sides of their natures—least satisfactory because of the vagueness of the available material rather than because of the author's treatment of the same.

As to "Conscience," the Egyptian had no word for it; nor is there any word that is its equivalent any more than there is for "morality" or "remorse." But a careful study of their inscription material shows manifestations of what we might call an "organized conscience." Psychologically they connected it with methods of perception of the "ego." As to "Creed," the Assyro-Babylonians had none, though they had sane religious beliefs. Among Egyptians the nearest approach to a universally accepted body of doctrine, which we call a creed, was the belief in immortality. Documents which discuss it preponderate in the literature of the nation. The most accepted form of it is that associated with the Osiris legend. Of course, statements of the creed of the Hebrews and the Muhammadans are not difficult to formulate.

A few of the single articles deserve especial mention. L. W. Batten has the happy faculty of stating succinctly the best things that can be said on the "Decalogue"; L. B. Paton elaborates the evidence for the

god "Dagan, Dagon," and shows convincingly that he was not a fish-god, but most probably an agricultural deity, related to the Hebrew word for "corn" (*dāgān*). James Strachan gives a clear historical statement of "Criticism (Old Testament)." C. Prüfer amplifies the real significance of "Drama" among the Arabs at the present day.

The exhaustive character of every article is emphasized and enhanced by the citation, either in footnotes or at the end, of a selected specialized bibliography on the phases discussed.

IRA MAURICE PRICE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

---

### CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS<sup>1</sup>

Faith is the fundamental element in religion. In faith there is an essential and regulating intellectual principle. "Observation and knowledge of the facts of life, wonder, curiosity, fear and doubt in presence of them, underlie religion, but unless they issue in distinctive faith, religion is still unconstituted. Faith does not shut its eyes to things seen, but, while seeing them, looks beyond to realities discerned behind them." Here we find the keynote to Dr. Curtis' book. The following five hundred pages are not a dogmatic but a historical unfolding of its embodied thought. There is no religion without a creed and confession, and this declaration is just a plain matter of history.

At the beginning, the author gives valuable definitions of words that are in constant use but of which there is too often no very clear conception of the meaning. A "Creed" is a short, comprehensive, dignified, frequently used, often rhythmical, statement, in the first person, of faith. A "Confession" is a more minute and systematic statement of faith, or creed. A "Catechism" is a creed or confession broken up and analytically simplified into a series of didactic questions and answers to assist the memory and intelligence of the young and unlearned. In like manner are defined: "Manifesto," "Declaration," "Profession," "Platform," "Symbol," "Consensus," "Covenant," "Form," "Formula," "Standard," "Rule of Faith," "Syllabus," "Decrees," "Canons," "Articles," "Theses," "Propositions," "Places," "Revision." We have put in the whole list because we believe there is need of greater precision in the use of these terms.

Having made a statement of his hypothesis, Dr. Curtis proceeds to

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith in Christendom and Beyond.* By William A. Curtis. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911.

see whether it is true. Comprehensively and concisely he takes in the whole field of religious experience. It is interesting to observe the number of cases in which Christianity has forced the non-Christian religions into clearer and more advanced statements of their beliefs.

Among the ancient Hebrews religion was natural. Men were born into it. It was the distinctive possession of the race. But when it became the religion of a book and the impulse arose to define its faith, sectarianism appeared. "Hear O Israel: The Lord is thy God, the Lord is one." The Psalms and Isaiah abound in creed matter, and the growth in later Jewish literature is unmistakable.

As we come on into the New Testament the advance is very marked. "In all the Gospels, conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the veritable son of God, is represented not only as His own fixed possession and the basis of His ministry in all its manysidedness, and as strengthened by the repeated Voice from Heaven at His baptism and transfiguration, but as increasingly shared by the Baptist, by the disciples and by others who came into contact with Him." In the other apostolic writings "the types of confession found in the Gospels are reproduced and extended. All preaching, all profession, and all participation in the church's young life was of the nature of confession."

Then when we come to the early stages of church history we are fairly embarked on the wide stream of creed development. A great, decisive, culminating point was reached at Nicaea, and both for weal and for woe the Christian world has been permeated with creeds, confessions, and catechisms—and our author without a trace of bias has respectfully and concisely handled them all—over one hundred and fifty in the aggregate. A review of them under such skilful and sympathetic direction cannot but have a liberalizing effect upon any open-minded reader.

At the end of the review follow chapters on "General Retrospect," "Reflections on the History," "Problems of Retention and Revision," "Subscription and Its Ethics," "The Ideal Creed." No short notice can do justice to these chapters. A single word must suffice. The world will never outgrow creeds and confessions. There are many evidences of reaction in our times, and resistance would be futile. Then shall we retain or revise? Both, in a sense. The future lies, not with the Greek and Roman churches, but with the great branches of the Reformed church, which with all their shortcomings have learned a higher Catholicity and a simpler ideal of dogma. But we must remember that "the moment our creeds and confessions begin to cramp the spiritual

faculties and impair access to truth and to the spirit of Scripture they ring their own knell."

If we adequately solve our problems of retention and revision, the far more difficult problem of the ethics of subscription will be relieved of many of its heart-breaking perplexities. Our author justly criticizes Lord Morley and Professor Sidgwick for their amateurish treatment of this subject—an amateurishness born of superficiality. The work closes with valuable historical tables and an index. The volume is attractive in its makeup.

J. W. MONCRIEF

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## New Literature

The most important books listed in these columns will receive notice in the book-review pages.

### OLD TESTAMENT

#### BOOKS

MITCHELL, H. G. *The Ethics of the Old Testament*. [Handbooks of Ethics and Religion, Edited by Shailer Mathews.] Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1912. Pp. x+417. \$2.00.

This is the first volume to be published of a new series, other contributors to which are Professors Coe, E. J. Goodspeed, G. B. Smith, and T. G. Soares. This volume gives a good objective account of the conduct of the Old Testament worthies and of the ethical ideals held by the prophets and psalmists.

BANKS, E. J. *Bismya, or The Lost City of Adab. A Story of Adventure, of Exploration, and of Excavation among the Ruins of the Oldest of the Buried Cities of Babylonia*. New York: Putnam, 1912. Pp. xxii+457.

A popular account of the expedition sent out to Bismya by the University of Chicago, of which Dr. Banks was in immediate charge for most of the period of its activity. Some of the statements made rest upon too slight a basis; but the volume will be found of interest by the layman in excavation and decipherment.

#### ARTICLES

BREYFOGLE, CAROLINE M. *The Hebrew Sense of Sin in the Pre-exilic Period*, *The American Journal of Theology*, October, 1912, pp. 542-60.

A study of the Hebrew consciousness of sin from the point of view of its social relationships.

BENNETT, W. H. *Religious Controversy in the Old Testament*, *The Expositor*, October, 1912, pp. 289-305.

A popular study of the judgments passed in the Old Testament upon the Kings from the point of view of their motives and their fairness.

### NEW TESTAMENT

#### BOOKS

GILBERT, GEORGE H. *Jesus*. New York: Macmillan, 1912. Pp. 321. \$1.50 net.

Of the many useful handbooks which Professor Gilbert has produced for Bible students, his *Student's Life of Jesus* has found most favor and is now in its third edition. This present work on Jesus, however, is new and different, the outcome of a more thorough historical investigation. If it is on that account less adapted to the superficial and devotional reader, it will have greater value for the student who is aware that there are difficult fundamental problems concerning the history of Jesus and who wishes to work at them.

FRAME, JAMES E. *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*. *International Critical Commentary*. New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. 326. \$2.50 net.

Within a decade we have been given four massive first-class commentaries on the Thessalonian Epistles: the first by Wohlenberg in 1903 (*Zehn Kommentar*); the second by Milligan in 1908 (printed to correspond with the *Lightfoot Commentaries*);

the third by v. Dobschütz in 1909 (*Meyer Kommentar*); and now the fourth by Frame in 1912 (*International Critical Commentary*). With these is also to be mentioned Lake's *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (1911), that seeks to show the relation of Paul's ideas and customs to the religious thought and life of the Mediterranean world. The student of Paul is particularly fortunate to have so much fine help in his studies.

BROOKE, A. E. *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Johannine Epistles. International Critical Commentary.* New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. 242. \$2.50 net.

Thirty years ago Bishop Westcott published his *Commentary on the Epistles of St. John* (1883), and since that time it has been the chief English work upon these writings. Westcott's training and early career were at the University of Cambridge. Now from another Cambridge scholar we have a new large *Commentary on the Johannine Epistles* that may supersede the former one. A comparison of the two works will give some idea of how New Testament exegesis has progressed in a generation of time. Mr. Brooke aims "to determine, in the light of our knowledge of Christian life and thought at the end of the first and beginning of the second century, what the writer seems to have intended his readers to understand by the words which he addressed to them."

MACKINTOSH, H. R. *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ. International Theological Library.* New York: Scribner, 1912. Pp. 540. \$2.50 net.

"It does not seem possible to hold or indicate the absoluteness of Christ as an intelligent conviction except by passing definitely into the domain of reasoned theory"; therefore the author (professor of theology at New College, Edinburgh) proceeds to this elaborate argument in behalf of the traditional Christology of the church. He presents first the Christology of the New Testament, then the History of Christological Doctrine, and finally a Reconstructive Statement of the Doctrine. The superior qualities of Dr. Mackintosh's book are likely to give it first place in the exposition and defense of the established doctrine of the person and work of Christ. In our modern attempt to interpret Jesus historically it is useful to refer to a first-class book like this that represents the classic theological interpretation of Jesus.

## RELATED SUBJECTS

LESTER, H. A. (editor). *Sunday School Teaching: Its Aims and Its Methods.* London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1912. Pp. x+135. 2s. net.

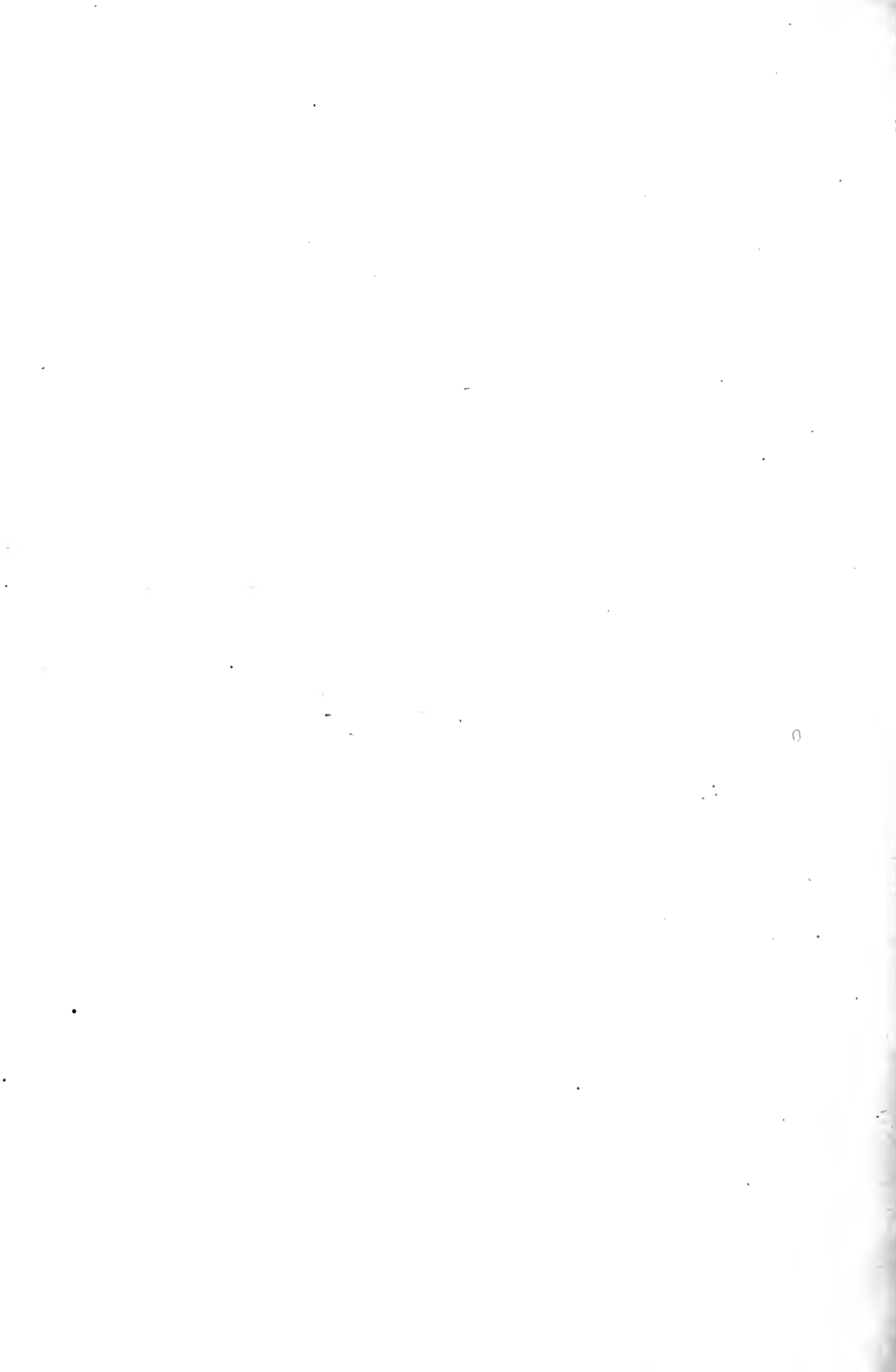
One of the most cheerful signs of the times is the appearance of sane books on Sunday-school teaching and methods. The editor of this little English work is heading in the right direction. The teacher is the key to the whole situation. Well trained, apt, and inspiring, the teacher can do marvels for the pupils. The multitudinous questions that come up in Sunday-school work are only half touched here, but we are told how to teach the Book of Common Prayer and the Catechism. Let us hope that this little manual will be only the beginning of a larger work that will give us an adequate treatment of the pressing themes of method and management.

CROSS, GEORGE. *The Theology of Schleiermacher. A Condensed Presentation of His Chief Work, "The Christian Faith."* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1911. Pp. xi+344. \$1.50.

It has long been recognized that an understanding of Schleiermacher is indispensable to an appreciation of the problems of modern theology. Unfortunately, his most important theological work has never been translated. Professor Cross has done something even better in some respects. He has given in clear and luminous English the general substance of Schleiermacher's treatise, so that English-speaking students will be attracted to it as they would not to a voluminous and inevitably heavy translation. Of course, scholars will prefer the original in any case. Thus this condensation will serve a real purpose in making Schleiermacher more universally accessible. The admirable historical introduction and the judicious summary and critique deserve high commendation.



## GENERAL INDEX



# GENERAL INDEX

	PAGE
Advantages Accruing from the Functional View of Religion and the Bible - - - - -	366
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE, THE 202, 265, 345, 413	413
Apocalypse, The Little - - - - -	130
Apostolic Decree, The History of the - - - - -	318
BALDWIN, EDWARD CHAUNCEY, The Debt of the Modern World to Israel's Priests - - - - -	54
Basis for Reconstruction in Christian Theology, A - - - - -	248
BOOK REVIEWS:	
<i>Bliss</i> , The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine - - - - -	68
<i>Brown</i> , The Christian Hope - - - - -	357
<i>Case</i> , The Historicity of Jesus - - - - -	210
<i>Curtis</i> , A History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith in Christendom and Beyond - - - - -	428
<i>Eucken</i> , The Truth of Religion - - - - -	139
<i>Gray and Peake</i> , A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah - - - - -	212
<i>Handcock</i> , Mesopotamian Archaeology - - - - -	358
<i>Harris</i> , The Odes and Psalms of Solomon - - - - -	69
<i>Hastings</i> , Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics - - - - -	425
<i>Labouet et Batiffol</i> , Les Odes de Solomon - - - - -	70
<i>Royce</i> , The Sources of Religious Insight - - - - -	139
<i>Slattery</i> , The Authority of Religious Experience - - - - -	424
<i>Wallis</i> , Sociological Study of the Bible - - - - -	285
<i>Welch</i> , The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom - - - - -	214
<i>Workman</i> , Christian Thought to the Reformation - - - - -	139
BRAITHWAITE, EDWARD E., Some Principles for Scripture Interpretation	118
BREWSTER, HAROLD S., The False Perspective of Religious Enthusiasm	374
BURTON, ERNEST D., Some Implications of Paulinism - - - - -	403
BURTON, HENRY FAIRFIELD, The Worship of the Roman Emperors -	80
CASTOR, GEORGE DEWITT, The Moral Paradox of Jesus - - - - -	9
CHAMBERLIN, GEORGIA LOUISE, Suggestions for Leaders of Bible Clubs	265, 352, 420
Christian Doctrine of the Future Life, The - - - - -	43, 109, 191, 254
Christianity and Critical Theology - - - - -	385
Christianity and the Hope of Social Redemption - - - - -	152

	PAGE
CLEMENT, ERNEST W., The Japanese Bible - - - - -	296
Critical Theology, The Function of a - - - - -	307
CROSS, GEORGE, Review of Workman, Christian Thought to the Reformation - - - - -	139
CURRENT OPINION - - - - -	205, 281, 356

Debt of the Modern World to Israel's Priests, The - - - - -	54
---	----

DICKEY, SAMUEL, Christianity and the Hope of Social Redemption - - - - -	152
--	-----

EASTON, BURTON SCOTT, The Little Apocalypse - - - - -	130
---	-----

## EDITORIALS:

The Relation between Religion and Freedom - - - - -	3
Hereditary Religion - - - - -	75
The Social Gospel - - - - -	147
The Church a Permanent Need of Human Society - - - - -	219
The Church in Religious Education - - - - -	291
A Change of Editorship - - - - -	363
EVANS, THOMAS S., Religious Work at the University of Pennsylvania - - - - -	397

False Perspective of Religious Enthusiasm, The - - - - -	374
--	-----

FULLERTON, KEMPER, The Problem of the Old Testament - - - - -	224, 330
---	----------

Function of a Critical Theology, The - - - - -	307
--	-----

GENUNG, JOHN FRANKLIN, Religious Life at Amherst - - - - -	31
--	----

GILBERT, GEORGE HOLLEY, Harnack, Loisy, and the Gospel - - - - -	92
--	----

The Apostolic Age - - - - -	265, 345, 413
-----------------------------	---------------

GORDON, ALEX. R., The Prophets as Models for the Preacher - - - - -	338
---	-----

GRISWOLD, HERVEY D., Some Characteristics of Hinduism as a Religion - - - - -	163
---	-----

Harnack, Loisy, and the Gospel - - - - -	92
--	----

HENKE, FREDERICK G., Advantages Accruing from the Functional View of Religion and the Bible - - - - -	366
---	-----

Hinduism as a Religion, Some Characteristics of - - - - -	163
---	-----

Historicity of the Apostolic Decree, The - - - - -	318
--	-----

## ILLUSTRATIONS:

Committee That Prepared the "Union Hymnal" for Use among

Japanese Christians - - - - -	302
-------------------------------	-----

Japanese Bible - - - - -	305
--------------------------	-----

Professor Benjamin Wisner Bacon, D.D. - - - - -	146
---	-----

Professor Charles Richmond Henderson, Ph.D., D.D. - - - - -	218
---	-----

Professor Shailer Mathews, D.D. - - - - -	362
---	-----

Revision Committee of the Japanese Bible - - - - -	290
--	-----

The Apotheosis of Antoninus and Faustina - - - - -	74
--	----

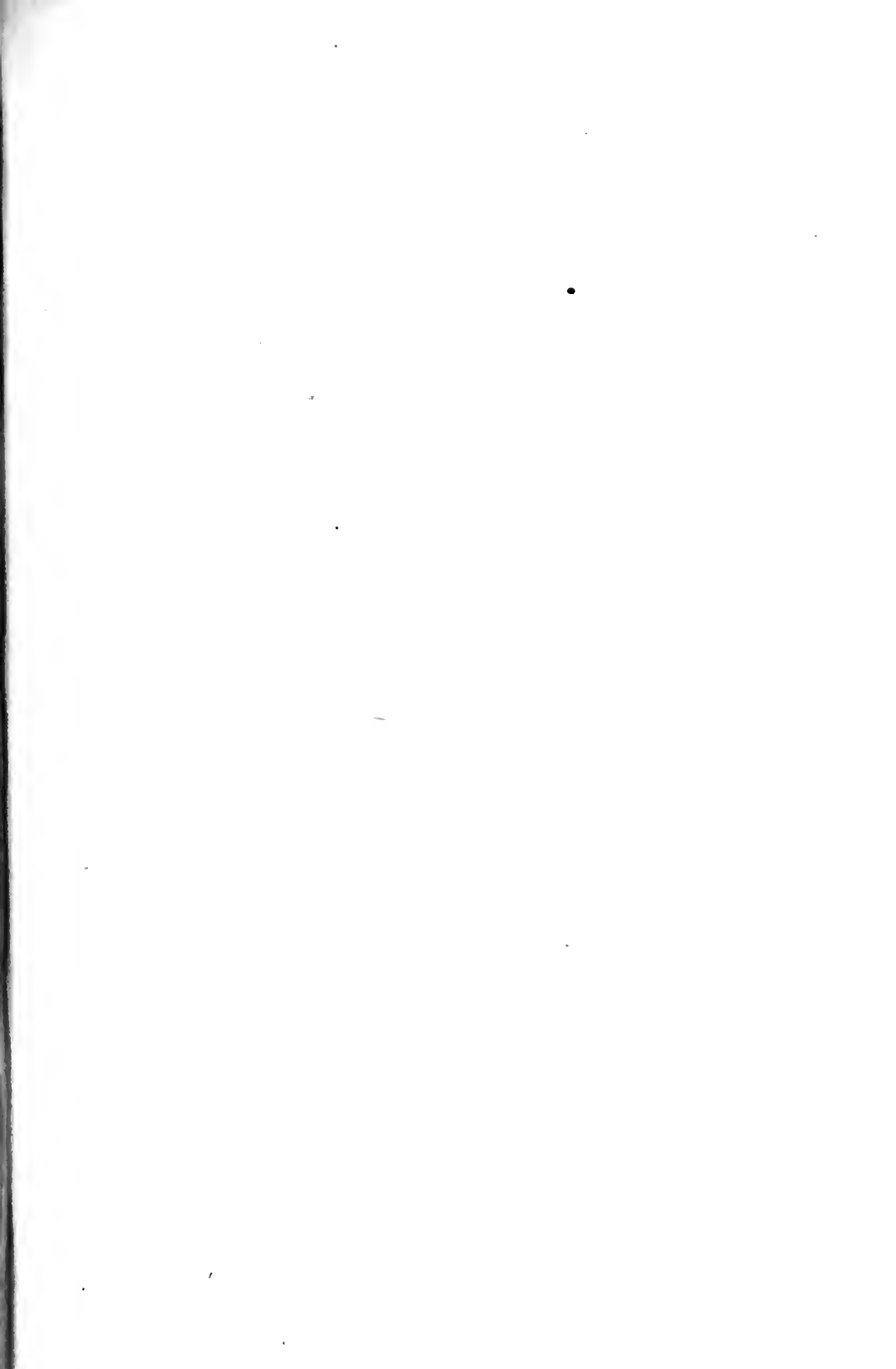
The Late Professor Willis Judson Beecher, D.D. - - - - -	2
--	---

# INDEX

437

	PAGE
Japanese Bible, The - - - - -	296
Jesus, The Moral Paradox of - - - - -	9
JORDAN, W. G., Review of Wallis, Sociological Study of the Bible -	285
Little Apocalypse, The - - - - -	130
Message of Jesus to the Young Men of Today, The - - - - -	38
MOEHLMANN, CONRAD H., The Historicity of the Apostolic Decree -	318
MOFFATT, JAMES, Review of Case, The Historicity of Jesus - - -	210
MONCRIFF, J. W., Review of Curtis, A History of Creeds and Confessions of Faith - - - - -	428
Moral Paradox of Jesus, The - - - - -	9
NEW LITERATURE - - - - -	72, 144, 216, 360, 421
PARSONS, EDWARD S., The Religious Life of Colorado College - -	184
PARSONS, ERNEST W., Reviews of:	
Harris, The Odes and Psalms of Solomon - - - - -	69
Labouet et Batifol, Les Odes de Solomon, une oeuvre chrétienne des environs de l'ans 100-120 - - - - -	70
PATON, LEWIS BAYLES, Review of Bliss, The Religions of Modern Syria and Palestine - - - - -	68
Paulinism, Some Implications of - - - - -	403
PRICE, IRA M., Reviews of:	
Gray and Peake, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah - - - - -	212
Handcock, Mesopotamian Archaeology - - - - -	358
Hastings, Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics - - - - -	425
Problem of the Old Testament, The - - - - -	224, 330
Prophets as Models for the Preacher, The - - - - -	338
Religion and the Bible, Advantages Accruing from the Functional View of - - - - -	366
Religious Enthusiasm, The False Perspective of - - - - -	374
Religious Life at Amherst - - - - -	31
Religious Life of Colorado College, The - - - - -	184
Religious Work at the University of Pennsylvania - - - - -	397
RHEES, RUSH, The Message of Jesus to the Young Men of Today -	38
ROBINS, HENRY B., Review of Slattery, The Authority of Religious Experience - - - - -	424
Roman Emperors, The Worship of the - - - - -	80
SMITH, GERALD BIRNEY, Theology and Biblical Criticism - - -	17
Theology and Religious Experience - - - - -	97
Theology and the History of Religion - - - - -	173
Theology and Scientific Method - - - - -	236

	PAGE
The Function of a Critical Theology - - - - -	307
Christianity and Critical Theology - - - - -	385
Reviews of:	
Eucken, The Truth of Religion - - - - -	140
Royce, The Sources of Religious Insight - - - - -	140
SMITH, HENRY PRESERVED, Review of Welch, The Religion of Israel under the Kingdom - - - - -	214
Social Redemption, Christianity and the Hope of - - - - -	152
Some Characteristics of Hinduism as a Religion - - - - -	163
Some Implications of Paulinism - - - - -	403
Some Principles of Scripture Interpretation - - - - -	118
Theology and Biblical Criticism - - - - -	17
Theology and Religious Experience - - - - -	97
Theology and Scientific Method - - - - -	236
Theology and the History of Religion - - - - -	173
University of Pennsylvania, Religion at the - - - - -	397
WORK AND WORKERS - - - - -	- 65, 207, 283
Worship of the Roman Emperors, The - - - - -	80
WRIGHT, HENRY W., A Basis for Reconstruction in Christian Theology	248
YOUTZ, HERBERT A., The Christian Doctrine of the Future Life	43, 109, 191, 254
Review of Brown, The Christian Hope - - - - -	358







BS  
410  
B58  
n.s.  
v.40

The Biblical world

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

